

HARRY C. DE VIGHNE

THE TIME
OF
MY LIFE

A Frontier Doctor
in Alaska



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MY earliest dated recollection is of a band marching down Seventh Avenue, leading a column of straggling men in oilcloth caps and capes who carried lighted torches and chanted "Blaine, Blaine, James G. Blaine."

Neither the slogan nor the political campaign in 1884 meant anything to me, but the lights, music, scuffling feet and gruff voices aroused my interest and lured me from the house. Without hat or coat, I edged into the street. When an alert, stocky little man at the end of the parade grinned at me invitingly, I fell in beside him and marched down to Fourteenth Street, across to Third Avenue and on down the Bowery. I never returned to the old house on Seventh Avenue; nearly a year later when I ventured into the neighbourhood it was vacant.

I was then about eight years old and desperately unhappy. Calamitous events in recent months had left me stranded in a world I hated and could not understand. Why had we left Havana? Why were we in this strange city? Why had my father and mother died so suddenly and mysteriously? Where was Sara, the old creole who had been nurse, friend and companion all my life? To these and other questions no less agonizing I could find no answers then, and some of them remain mysteries still. All I knew was that home, Tia Isobel, Tio Manuel, relatives, friends, everyone I had known and loved, were gone. They were now confused and shadowy dreams, into which intruded a cold and terrifying nightmare called New York.

After the funeral Tony, a friend of my father's, had taken me down to his house on Seventh Avenue, but he seemed to be aware of my presence only of a Saturday night and Sunday, when the drudgery of his work and his dour disposition were softened by wine. And his nagging, slattern wife never ceased reminding me that I was an unwelcome addition to the family. No one bothered to explain why I was not allowed to leave the house; why I was avoided as something unclean, or dangerous. I was thinking vaguely about running away, when the parade crystallized an attractive idea into an accomplished fact.

The friendly little man following the torchlight procession was known as Shorty McGurk. He had sharp, twinkling blue eyes, a disarming smile and the richest, most seductive brogue I have ever heard, which, I learned later, carried a touchy load of dynamite. As I trudged beside him down the Bowery, numerous tough-looking men carrying sticks and stones dropped in behind us, heckling the paraders until, when we neared Chatham Square, a riot started. It was a grand fight, the first I had seen, and my admiration for Shorty grew immeasurably as I watched him and his gang breaking up the parade.

Continuing on down the street, we reached McGurk's saloon; the crowds swarmed inside; Shorty gave me a nickel and told me to be on my way. But I was not to be dismissed so lightly. The night was warm, I was very tired. Determined not to lose my new friend, I sat in a doorway across the street and was soon fast asleep.

The next day dragged through eternity. Somehow I found, or was found by, Shorty, who, it must be admitted, showed no signs of extreme pleasure. He was uncertain where I had joined the parade and I was unable or unwilling to enlighten him. As I spoke Spanish, French, and a little English of a kind not in use by him, and as his brogue was not very intelligible to me, our progress toward an understanding was slow. But when he finally made out that my parents were dead, that I had no relatives in New York, and that no one really wanted me, he marched me upstairs to Mrs. Quinn, his housekeeper.

"Here now," he barked, as though he suspected she might be at the bottom of it. "Look at this poor little Ginnie wit narry a cap nor coat to his name! An starvin' at that! Give him a bite to eat till I larn where he belongs." So far as I know this was the extent of his efforts to locate Tony.

Mrs. Quinn was a large, dreamy-eyed and straggled woman well beyond middle age, who came of a morning and stayed until after supper, which was a most unpredictable hour. As I recall it she spent much of the time sitting at a window, sipping beer from a tin pail and smoking a small stone pipe. Throughout the day there was always something simmering on the stove, and the table was always set and ready for Shorty.

Seemingly, it was taken for granted that I was to be a permanent fixture in his establishment. I helped keep the place in order, or at least habitable, rushed the growler for Mrs. Quinn, ran errands for Shorty, polished his shoes and made myself generally useful.

In return he gave me clothes, money to spend, food at all hours and a bed in an alcove off the kitchen.

Our rooms were above his brother's saloon. This was one of the most disreputable dives in the city, where all sorts of men and women came to see Shorty at all hours, day and night. But his rôle in the triangle of vice, politics and police was then unknown to me; I was not interested, and any inquiries I may have made were probably evaded. Nor did the poverty and dissipation that extended from Cooper Union to City Hall impress me greatly. It was a different world, with strange manners and customs, but one to which I readily adjusted myself; a world far more comfortable and congenial than the one I had known in Seventh Avenue.

Shorty McGurk's credo, if he had one, included uncompromising loyalty to friends, and unremitting scepticism toward the world at large. He was steeped in the doctrine of expediency; whatever worked was good, and it was right if it was not categorically prohibited and gave rise to no disagreeable consequences. This left room for many a nice point to be interpreted in the light of his understanding, as well as for the exercise of considerable ingenuity of execution. It was only the refinements of child behaviour that found him vague and unprepared; in its more elemental aspects he was quite positive.

"Now listen, me lad," he notified me shortly after I came, "there'll be no lyin' to me, an' no stealin' from anyone. An' you'll mind what I say, or I'll beat the hell out of you. An' you'll not be leavin' the block till you tell me or the old lady." He gave the impression of meaning what he said and I remembered it.

Rugged individualism was no empty phrase in the Bowery of the early eighties; it was an established way of living, burdened with few restrictions and fewer inhibitions. Life was an endless battle, but not of trained divisions, regiments and platoons; it was a free-for-all engagement between snipers in open formation, every man for himself. Skill, cunning, deception, and fraud were the weapons and trade the objective, trade which flowed briskly through innumerable small lines of communications into neutral zones, and often into forbidden territory. Hundreds of thrifty Jews, Irish, German, and Italian traders found rich rewards for their long hours and alert industry. Their mean and shabby enterprises often served as gateways to respectable establishments uptown. But many remained long after they had risen above the Bowery's level to enjoy a leisure they had earned, and many

another was driven by fate or circumstances into still deeper depths. Whether one sank, floated with the current or swam to higher ground were matters of shrewdness, luck, and perhaps predestination.

I could read simple English and was eager to speak it without a Ginnie accent, Ginnie being the epithet Shorty applied impartially to all Latins. Both he and Mrs. Quinn considered my ambition praiseworthy, as they had great contempt for what he referred to as damned furriners. When I read newspaper headlines aloud, usually at breakfast-time, they corrected my pronunciation. The result was a curious Bowery-English with a Spanish twist and an Irish flavour that clung to me long after I left New York.

The subject of schooling was mentioned from time to time, more as a future need than a present duty. But my education was not neglected. Mrs. Quinn knew and retold the local gossip with a wealth of adjectives that held me spellbound, and Shorty had a rich store of information in a variety of matters which no school ever taught. This he gave to me generously; any errors which crept into his revelations were not those of credulity. More of life's realities than its ideals were thus kept before me. I learned the streets, the gangs, standards by which one gained or lost prestige, friendly police and those to be avoided, sources of information, whom and what to believe, where to look for favours, regions safe to explore alone and those where safety lay in numbers.

Shorty's customary attitude toward me was fatherly, in accordance with his own ideas of paternal duties and responsibilities. My presence evidently awakened some protective instinct in his nature which was no less gratifying to him than helpful to me. In public this was hidden under a thin veneer of slightly exaggerated indifference, but privately it glowed with unmistakable warmth. There were times, however, when it blazed furiously. Given a good cause, and occasionally upon slight provocation, his quick temper exploded with a blast of curses that withered me. He would then swear by all the saints that I was no good, that he was through with me, that he would throw me out or turn me over to the police. But the storm passed in a moment, his angry bellows subsided into complaining growls which died without leaving a sting.

Thus my education progressed for nearly two years under the wise and worldly supervision of Shorty McGurk, an obscure agent

of a powerful political machine supported by respected public officials. During that time he was seldom if ever entirely sober, nor did I ever see him incompetently drunk. Somewhere between these extremes he found that state of exhilaration he craved, and he seemed able to maintain it without noticeable effort.

Late one night he came home soaked to the skin, chilled to the bone. He had been out in a rainstorm for hours and was either very drunk or delirious, or more likely both. Next day he was taken to Bellevue Hospital, where, in a day or so, he died.

Shorty's brother was not interested in me nor I in him; therefore I moved down the street to Mrs. Quinn's. But she had only two small rooms, so I slept on a pallet in the kitchen. It was Shorty's easygoing generosity that had kept her employed; following his death she grew even more shiftless and slovenly. Seeking comfort in beer and her pipe, she lost whatever interest she may have had in me and we gradually drifted apart.

I knew a number of boys who sold newspapers in the streets, therefore had learned something of the trade, and the art of spotting likely customers. And one of Shorty's cronies owned a news-stand under the elevated station in Chatham Square. To him I applied for a job. In a day or so I was in business for myself.

TO achieve and maintain professional standing as a news-boy it was necessary to observe certain conventions, and to rise above mediocrity a definite technique was to be practised. All the better locations were held by right of purchase or force of arms, therefore to be caught poaching in these private domains invited trouble.

The beginner was forced into side streets to make the most of whatever opportunities he could find. Not only must he supply existing demands for his papers; new ones must be created, influential friends made. He must align himself with a gang, cultivate drunks and spenders, and finally, learn how to keep the change without losing a customer. With patience, tact and industry he could then advance himself into a more favourable location.

It was quite possible to adjust scale of living to income, however small it be. There were no housing problems in summer. One worked, rested, played, ate, and on occasion attended to more private matters in the streets. Any unoccupied doorway afforded a place to sleep, often with some family driven from the crowded tenements for a breath of air. Winter was not so kindly, but accommodations could be found to fit any purse. Hotels offered a more or less private room for twenty-five cents; a canvas cot in a warm flop-house cost a dime; or one could lie on the bare floor for five cents.

If these were out of reach, there was an open grate behind the World Building, with heat boiling up all night long from the press rooms below. There, a half-dozen youngsters, if not too large, could keep from freezing at no cost at all. And as a last resort one could usually beg some sort of shelter from the women derelicts around Bismarck Hall, in Pearl Street. These creatures would probably be classed with the lowest form of female life, yet on a cold night they could always be depended on for a dime, if they had it, and their charity was never wrapped in a sermon or tied with advice.

Food presented no difficulties if one's appetite was good and

his tastes not too fastidious. At Mike Lyon's restaurant, where the doors were never locked, a luxurious dinner cost a quarter, often much less in the quiet hours. A place on Christie Street served two fried eggs with potatoes, bread and coffee for a dime. In dozens of saloons one could give a nickel to a man and raid the free-lunch counter while he sipped his beer. The very bottom of the scale was reached in Mariners' Temple, on Henry Street; a bowl of soup with a thick slice of bread could there be had for one cent!

To a healthy youngster free from dietetic complexes, this food served the double purpose of satisfying a need and tasting good. Many years later, with the enjoyment of a ten-cent Bowery dinner lingering in my mind, I tried one. But something was wrong somewhere; it simply wouldn't go down.

With any sort of luck, one could make from ten to twenty-five cents a day and often much more. I recall one cold night in front of Pat Farley's saloon during a political meeting, when a happy customer bought all my papers so I could go home. But in a jiffy I was back with more, shivering and snivelling as usual. This, with slight variations, was repeated several times until Big Tim Sullivan gave me a dollar to be rid of me. Again, a beautifully dressed woman with tears in her troubled eyes stopped me near the old Thalia. After some angry words with the man accompanying her, she gave me five dollars for one paper. And there was the night a Chinaman, in reaching for some change, dropped a five-dollar bill. Not at that time being a student of Horatio Alger, I kept my foot on the money until its rightful owner was at a safe distance. Many brief moments of riches could be recalled, yet during almost three years while I was on my own in the Bowery, I never possessed more than a dollar or so longer than a few hours. And I was usually down to a few cents. Variety shows, second-hand stores, push-carts, dime novels, pitching pennies, impecunious friends and a ravenous appetite, which never seemed to be quite satisfied, kept me broke.

Nominally, I lived nearly a year with Mrs. Quinn, keeping my box of valuables under her bed, and sleeping on the kitchen floor on those rare nights when I could find nothing better. After Shorty's death she existed for a time on the generosity of his friends, and an occasional odd job which never lasted but a few days. As she was usually drunk, even these skimpy resources failed her in time; when she was released from one of her enforced

vacations on Blackwell's Island, her household effects had disappeared, including my precious box. I have no recollection of seeing her again.

My favourite loafing place was the South Street docks, where I spent many hours on pleasant days, watching strange ships and their mysterious cargoes and dreaming of the day when I could see the world. One morning I managed to steal aboard a freighter and hide in the hold, where I stayed two days waiting for her to leave. When hunger finally drove me on deck and into the arms of the police, I learned she would not sail for weeks.

As a rule even strange police were tolerant of small misdemeanours, especially if one were polite and obviously frightened. But truant officers who roamed the streets at infrequent intervals were not so easily managed. One then needed a friend. Fortunately, I could depend on someone who had known Shorty to come to my aid with convincing explanations and promises. A word from The Big Feller, as everyone called Timothy Sullivan, was even more effective.

Nothing kept me from finding time to read and there was no one to interfere in my choice of material. Progressing with difficulty from newspapers to fiction, I devoured scores of the cheapest thrillers, believing every word I read. Old Cap Collier, Old Sleuth, Deadwood Dick, and a host of lusty characters whose adventures I followed breathlessly from week to week, were living, flesh-and-blood people to me. Their exploits having been duly recorded with names, dates, and places, they must be true.

In conversation, on the other hand, everyone, including myself, lied freely. Words spoken one moment were denied the next, often with such vigour and sincerity as to start a fight. Therefore boasting recitals in the fields of sex, crime and adventure left me unimpressed. They probably were not true.

My reading taught me of a marvellously exciting world beyond the city. It was inhabited by supermen bent on rescuing beautiful women in distress and punishing villains of deepest dye. It was a land where hunger, cold, and poverty always led to riches, where temporary suffering always brought compensating happiness, where right and justice always prevailed.

In the Bowery, right was anything that could be put over successfully; justice was something no one ever got. I knew a good, many distressed women around Chatham Square, but none of them were beautiful; the heroic men I heard about were dead,

or in jail, and any unusual excitement presaged a call for the police. Merely to exist was a struggle against unequal odds; life as I knew it had little mystery and no glamour. It was revealed everywhere in all its ugly details stripped to its bare bones. But somewhere, according to my chief sources of information, was a dreamland which was different. Life there must be extremely pleasant.

By the time I was twelve, threads of information gathered from Shorty and picked up in the streets had been woven into a thin but serviceable mantle of wisdom. An introverted disposition had tended to isolate me from the inner circles of numerous gangs which infested the streets and I had been immunized against credulity. Shorty had taught me to be sceptical. Lacking the aggressiveness necessary to leadership, and too preoccupied with my own plans and dreams to be a dependable follower, I was left pretty much to my own devices. These were no worse than, and but little different from, those of other youngsters of my age, and did not seem to have been materially influenced by my surroundings.

My chief interests were food, physical comfort, day-dreams, a supply of reading matter under the elevated station, a change of clothing when necessary. Vanity, perhaps, made this latter need a constant drain on my money. Each article was bought separately at a second-hand store with more regard for appearance than fit. It was worn without removal while its newness lasted, or until it became offensive or unserviceable, then discarded. My greatest ambition was to operate a hurdy-gurdy of an evening, and to drive a beer truck behind four black, prancing horses by days. Later, as I grew rich, I would travel.

Questions of ways and means were beginning to bother me. How could I do the things I wanted to do, see what I wanted to see, be what I wanted to be? Of the dozen or more local celebrities I knew, who seemed to have gained enviable success, the gigantic figure of Timothy Sullivan stood supreme above them all. As a youngster he had sold papers in the streets, he was now rich. He was more powerful than the law; his word was the law. He gave orders right and left, even to the police. Everyone went to him for advice, money, jobs. He understood their problems and kept them out of jail.

He had influence, a pull, which was something money couldn't always buy. It had to be earned as a reward for services. It was a

kind of gratitude to be stored up like money in a bank and used where it would do the most good. Shorty, whose advice had always been practical, if not in strict accord with the highest ideals, had the right idea. He claimed that if one played the game and stuck to the rules his chance would come; something was sure to bring him to the attention of the right people.

The right people, it seems, had had their eyes on me for some time. Late one afternoon an exceedingly brisk young woman bought a paper. While examining her purse for change she asked my name.

"Carlos," I replied. It was a question I had heard every day, therefore it gave me no alarm.

"And where do you live?" she continued, casually.

She was now getting on dangerous ground. A truant officer had asked me that very thing a day or so before, and I had given him some fictitious details about supporting an imaginary mother over on Second Avenue.

"Oh, I live down the street. My father owns a store. He thinks a boy should earn his own spending money."

"Is that so!" The same truant officer was standing behind me, an expression of grim amusement on his pudgy face. Escape was impossible. The young woman was kind and her manner reassuring, but the law's grip could not be shaken off. All my protests and pleas were in vain, my excuses ignored.

I was taken to a place on Chambers Street, questioned, examined, scrubbed, given an outfit of new clothing, tagged, fed and put to bed, under guard. The examination was frightening, but the bath was rather pleasant. It was the first I had had in two years, and it was the first clean bed I had occupied since Shorty's death. Next day, along with twenty-nine other homeless boys, I was put aboard a train bound for the great unknown.

ONE hard-faced man and two bewildered women accompanied us; three adults and thirty badly scared and resentful hoodlums from New York's lower east side, crowded into an old day-coach, journeyed westward in search of what was described as the land of opportunity.

Our car had been hitched to a regular train and was side-tracked in a small county-seat shortly after we crossed the Mississippi River; arrangements had been made there to begin distribution of the cargo of orphans. As a prelude, the accumulated refuse had been cleared out and we were warned, in effect, that if we were to find happy homes the curtain must rise on a scene of politeness, personal cleanliness and good behaviour.

In a few minutes a tall, raw-boned woman with small hungry eyes and a tight little smile entered the car and minced her way down the aisle.

"Good morning, children," she chirped. "Welcome to beautiful Iowa. I've brought you some nice cookies. If you are very good and say your prayers every night, God will make you big and strong and happy."

This overture was received in glum and disapproving silence. No one was interested in her offering and no one wanted to be big and strong. What we wanted above all else was to get out of that car. She stood a moment expectantly, then gathered her skirts and vanished.

It was a grim, spiritless performance on our part as farmers began straggling aboard. Some were awkward and sympathetic; a few tried to win our favour with smirks and jokes. Others were shy and seemed to have come under protest to see what was going on. Still others were severely important, determined not to be swayed by any nonsense while looking us over. They examined our teeth, eyes and ears, felt our muscles and joints, walked us forth and back while commenting in hoarse grunts and sly whispers as they appraised us for what we might be worth. Tags gave our names, ages, and nationalities, and an attendant extolled our virtues. One would have imagined New York was

sacrificing its most promising juveniles to the grand old State of Iowa. What we thought of the proceedings was unprintable.

A short, paunchy man with loose lips hanging above stringy whiskers waddled down the aisle, a sharp-eyed woman following him closely. He stopped a couple of seats ahead of me, read the boy's tag, ordered him to stand.

"Let's see yer han's." He felt the boy's palms, then the muscles of his arms. "Guess y'ain't never done much work, hev ye? Don't look like y'ever had much t'eat neither. Know anything about milkin'?"

The boy mumbled something in reply; the man again glanced at his hands, then advanced to me.

"Stand up. How d'ye say that name uv yourn?"

I looked at him blankly. "Me noh spick Eenglish."

"Well, I'll be durned! Must be some kind uv a Dago. What'll they be sendin' out here next?" He turned to the woman. "I guess that tall feller's about the best uv the lot. We'll try him out."

The understanding was that there should be some evidence of mutual attraction between foster parent and child. Given this prerequisite, arrangements for adoption could be made, or if this were impracticable, the child could be "bound out" until he became of age. It was a delightfully simple plan, but not very practicable. We were dead tired, irritable, apprehensive, and desperately homesick; a sorry lot from which to choose a son and heir. As all the farmers looked alike to us, and none of them very prepossessing, we had nothing but intuition and the guiding hand of Providence to determine the choice of a parent.

Several hours of examinations and consultations had resulted in no more than five or six provisional adoptions, and I was thoroughly disgusted. If this were the great and glorious west, I wanted no more of it. The entire trip had been disappointing. Cities and towns appeared half-deserted, the people half-asleep, the country bleak and lonesome. Hour after hour I had kept watching through a window, but there were no signs of Indians, cowboys or bandits.

In no mood for further exhibition, I was planning a break for liberty when a large, weatherbeaten man with flowing moustaches and imperial entered the car. His striking appearance almost exactly fulfilled my expectations. That he made no demands to have us perform for him was most encouraging. While he stood talking to an attendant I sidled up to him. His

kindly blue eyes and soft southern drawl were disarming and washed away my bitterness. If he wanted an orphan he could have me.

But there were delays, consultations, and more delays. He walked the length of the car and back, glancing briefly right and left while my heart fluttered uneasily. Then with a hand under my chin he lifted my face, searching it with his shrewd, slightly humorous eyes. He must fetch his wife, he said. I looked all right to him, but she, too, must be suited.

In an hour or so they returned. "Well, son," he said, patting my shoulder, "I'm your new grandfather and here's your grandma. Say good-bye to the boys. We've got fifteen miles to drive."

There was a shrieking chorus of farewells. Perhaps I imagined that there were also sighs of relief from the attendants as we climbed into a wagon and drove away. Late that night we arrived at my new home.

While still on the road my confidence was won by the tactful manner in which they included me in the conversation, casually, as though I were, in fact, their grandson returning from a vacation. As I sat wedged between them, agreeably warmed by their bodies and soothed by their even voices, Grandmother gave my hand a reassuring squeeze, telling me I need have no fear.

The family comprised Grandfather, Grandmother, Aunt Annie and her husband Uncle Tom, and Gus, the hired man. Uncle Ike, a son, was then away from home studying law, and two other daughters were married and living elsewhere.

Grandfather was then about sixty years old, quite unlettered, but by no means uninformed. With Grandma, his bride, he had migrated from Kentucky into southern Iowa, taking a homestead of eighty acres of rich bottom land and developing it into a farm. A tempestuous, unreconstructed rebel, he was surrounded by northern sympathizers, whose loyalty, however, had not moved them to risk their lives in support of the Union during the Civil War. But Grandfather had stolen away from home to join Quantrel's Raiders. This circumstance, which the old gentleman delighted in bringing up when arguments grew heated, kept smouldering an enmity that had blazed furiously on many an occasion. But by the time I arrived only a few occasional sparks remained.

Within certain limits Grandfather was calm, suave and easy-going, but when sufficiently provoked he was even more violently

explosive than Shorty McGurk. And on these occasions he usually did something about it. A few weeks after I came he spanked me thoroughly for having told him a lie. When I wriggled away to a safe distance and began cursing he threw an axe at me, fortunately with poor aim. But it was a gesture I never forgot. From then onward we understood each other perfectly and remained the best of friends.

On pleasant days he spent the afternoons in a rocking chair in the shade of an old maple tree, smoking strong home-grown tobacco and hailing passing neighbours. His customary exclamation of surprise or agitation was "Hell's afire!"

Grandma, about ten years younger than he, was his perfect antithesis in size and disposition, but she ruled him with an iron hand, gloved with deepest devotion. All her life she had worked as befits a man. Starting with two mules, a covered wagon, a cow, and some home-made furnishings, a baby in arms and another on the way, they had driven westward into what was then virgin territory. She had helped him hew logs for their first home, clear ground for a garden, bring the raw land under cultivation. Twice their home was burned to the ground. Once they had lived with the mules in a barn until the house was rebuilt. For more than thirty years she had endured Grandfather's stormy temper, in itself no small personal triumph, bearing him ten children and burying six. The last was a thirteen-year-old boy whom they hoped I might replace.

For the first time I now had a decent room to myself, privacy, extra clothes in a closet, a feather bed, books on a shelf, pride in prized possessions. Work for the moment was slack; spring planting was finished, harvest not yet begun. Uncle Tom and Gus attended to routine chores, leaving Grandfather free to coddle his rheumatism in the sun.

I had time to get acquainted, to explore to my heart's content. An entirely different life confronted me. The simplest procedures had to be explained, and I had a thousand questions to tax the family's patience. Catching butterflies, frogs, snakes, grasshoppers, fireflies, and once a bumble-bee, were new, and the latter a startling experience. I learned where milk came from, and how to squirt it into a pail. I fed the pigs, gathered eggs, split kindling, watched birds building their nests and chased rabbits from the garden. There was an abundance of ripening fruit and berries that need not be stolen; fine old maple trees to climb; soft warm grass

to caress my naked feet. And I had not seen a policeman since leaving New York.

The house, a rambling structure of hewed logs, sat on an elevation that gave a fine view of the surrounding country. One could look to the north for miles across great patches of corn extending in delicate shades of green and yellow, or westward following a double line of rail fence bordering the road as it meandered across two miles of rolling hills to the village. To the north and east our own fields and pastures ended in a dark band of forest marking the river's course. With Old Major, a sad-eyed hound, as companion, the vast distances, as they had at first seemed, soon became familiar playgrounds.

Across the river a region of swamps, creeks, sloughs and timbered bluffs formed a semi-jungle of bad repute, called Hungry Hollow. Originally inhabited by Indians and runaway slaves, there had been a slow infiltration of so-called poor white trash resulting in a settlement of social outcasts. Every morning some of these people passed our house en route to the village, where they sold stovewood and catfish in sufficient quantities to buy store-goods.

I was a little fearful of the tall, swarthy, barefooted and shift-eyed men, but a few of the young women were quite pretty in their brightly coloured skirts and kerchiefs, and sometimes they flashed me a toothy smile in passing. An old negro mammy who lived among them was in great demand throughout the country as a midwife. But more fascinating to me was a bent and wrinkled old woman called Aunt Mandy, a veritable witch. Among other occult powers, she was able to cure bleeding, burns, and erysipelas by incantation.

Once, when I had burned my hand, Grandma called her in. She sat a moment with her eyes closed, then spat on the burn, stroked it three times with a forefinger while whispering inaudibly. This was repeated three times, and I must say seemed to relieve the pain. As this was my first experience in the art of healing, it made a very deep impression. Here was something worth knowing; possessed of this accomplishment, I could travel the world over, gaining fame and fortune.

After months of persistent wheedling I learned that the curative properties lay in the whispered words, that the spit and strokings were potent adjuvants used to activate them. If they were spoken aloud or divulged except as prescribed by long tradition, that is,

in a dark room, at midnight, to one of the opposite sex, their power was lost. Having learned more modern methods of treating burns, I now give the magic formula.

"From God, the Father, this fire came; to God, the Father, it shall return again. These words, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen. And God will it."

The long summer days passed quickly, but there were nights when the deep silence which settled over the country was almost unbearable. No amount of kindness through the day could then satisfy an intense longing for the lights, noises, crowds, and smells of Chatham Square. Late one night, driven by an overpowering loneliness, I packed a small bundle of clothing and slipped away to the village, to find it equally quiet, the streets deserted. I had no money, but I had heard of tramps beating their way on freight trains and I knew many of them stopped there for water. I was determined to make my way back to New York. While waiting at the station I turned and found Old Major sitting quietly on his haunches, his long tail waving a plea for recognition, his sad eyes watching me reproachfully. He must have sensed something was amiss. Contrary to his usual playfulness, he had followed me in silence and was now awaiting developments. When he came over and licked my hand his eyes were begging me to reconsider. Together we returned to the house.

The village had grown slowly around a crossroads until it contained about eight hundred people: retired farmers and small time merchants with a second generation employed in local affairs, and a third in school. Ultra-conservative and rigidly orthodox, they had been standardized by intermarriage and circumscribed by convention until they were all of a pattern. Any differences were not in kind, but in degree. They used the same expressions with the same flat, nasal twang, walked with the same long deliberate stride, carried the same musty odour, dressed alike, and in all essentials thought alike. Intellectual stimulation was sought in the annual County Fair held some fifteen miles distant, and in debating societies, spelling bees, a weekly newspaper, and the churches, Baptist or Methodist, depending on slight variations in spiritual needs. For recreation there were basket sociables, lawn parties, croquet, moonlight walks, buggy rides, rocking chairs and gossip.

I was something of a problem when I entered school for the

first time at the beginning of the term. Being advanced beyond my years in some subjects and unaware that others existed, I created a situation without precedent. To make matters worse, my social status was in question. Some of the very best people, distinguished chiefly by their cupolaed houses, lace curtains, and pianos, were wondering if an exile from the slums of New York might not spread some sort of pestilence among their offspring.

Fortunately I showed no evidence of disease; when no signs of increasing demoralization appeared, the tension was eased. I could have told their youngsters some of the facts of life into which curiosity was tempting them to probe, and which instinct was urging them to experiment with vicariously, but it is doubtful if anyone could have added to their store of filth or taught them much in deviltry, except perhaps a little finesse in its execution.

By the end of the year I had traversed the fifth and sixth grades, but I came to a full stop at the seventh. Arithmetic and spelling had been hard to manage, and when grammar was added the burden was too much for me. No matter how industriously I applied myself, the results were unsatisfactory. My mind was a jungle in which a few tender seedlings were smothered by weeds, leaving no room for the cultivation of flowers.

First traces of mental discipline appeared in my second year in school. I was learning to study understandingly and to some purpose, to discover the idea hidden in a paragraph or page and translate it into words of my own, even if I could not spell them correctly or arrange them grammatically. The difficulty, of course, was my eagerness to push ahead into more interesting subjects, to run before I had learned to balance myself and walk. And I had discovered that ignorance could often be concealed in a shower of words. But I could not bluff through a written examination. At the end of my second year in school I was still in the seventh grade.

Studying through summer vacation under the direction of a friendly teacher enabled me to pass into the eighth grade. School was now no more than rather tiresome drudgery; I was in classes with boys of my age and had no feeling of inferiority. And other matters were demanding consideration. Being in my thirteenth year, it was time to think of something beyond schooling. Time to consider a career.

Grandfather and Uncle Tom were taking it for granted that I would stick to the farm. Its many advantages had been weighed against the few disadvantages until the evidence was overwhelm-

ing, until I, myself, was more than half convinced. But Grandma had her doubts.

There was a small streak of romanticism in Grandma's make-up which the presence in her household of an orphan alien uncovered. As our acquaintance ripened into genuine affection, she became more and more concerned about my past. Who was I? After my parents' death, why had no one appeared to claim me? Just how much of my early childhood did I remember?

We had gone into the matter several times, without bringing out any satisfying information. I remembered clearly my name and birthday, the big stone house overlooking Havana, where we had lived. And a fat black cook who smoked long cigars while holding me on her lap, a mango tree under which I played with a little girl, carriage rides far into the country with my father and mother, an old priest who came often to talk with my mother.

Much less clearly, but not less certainly, I could recall Grandfather Solano. He was a big, grave and kindly man with snow-white hair who always seemed to be riding a horse, and who was not on friendly terms with my father. He lived on a hill surrounded by great fields of sugar cane, with many thatched huts near the house, and many, many negroes living in them. Aunt Isobel, who came often to our house in Havana, was very beautiful, and took mother and me out for rides. Uncle Manuel, who came sometimes, was tall and dark and taught me to ride a horse. There were some cousins, but I could not recall their names.

Curiously, I remembered leaving Havana, but had no recollection of arriving in New York, and almost none of the intervening months until I went to live with Tony. They probably were without unusual incident. Suddenly the even flow of our lives had been broken. My father was carried from the house and never came back, servants disappeared. An atmosphere of hushed solemnity in which I seemed to have no part, yet sensed as disastrous, settled over the house. A day or so later, when my mother also disappeared, the only world I knew collapsed.

The days, or weeks, I spent at Tony's were as years. I understood, of course, that my father and mother had died, but no one took the trouble to explain the circumstances. When I slipped away and joined the torchlight procession, and was taken in by Shorty McGurk, my feelings of thankfulness and relief were so deep and my dread of being returned so great, I dared not discuss it even with him. Having thus severed all contacts with

riends and relatives, there was no one to remind me of my childhood days, and succeeding events had been so absorbingly vital to my existence as to drive all but a few sketchy pictures from my mind.

That was about all I could remember and I had no desire then for more details, which I imagined could only be unpleasant. Understanding my feelings, Grandma curbed her curiosity, doubtless pleased at the extent to which she and Grandfather had taken the places of any relatives I may have had. But she was decidedly uneasy about my future.

"Carlos will never be a farmer," she predicted time and again. "He's got the gift of tongues and a double crown; he'll travel far and eat bread in many kingdoms."

But the farm had its points. Plenty of food, no great discomforts, no restraining laws, no heavy-handed police. With a good hired man to do the work and a reliable almanac to consult, farming seemed easy and almost foolproof. Every important undertaking was governed by signs and portents set forth in this popular manual, which, when rightly interpreted and observed, insured success. Planting, harvesting, preserving fruit, setting hens, killing hogs, soap-making, all were favourably or unfavourably influenced by the moon, stars and planets. Of this both Grandfather and Grandma were firmly convinced. When the sign was right, everything hummed, and when it was not we waited until it changed. As waiting was one of the things I liked to do, Grandfather's arguments were gaining weight with me and New York's crowded, hard-bitten east side was fading into the realm of half-forgotten memories.

The disturbing element proved to be Uncle Ike. After having been admitted to the bar, he had located in the Black Hills, of all places, and had sent Grandma some money from Deadwood. That alone was enough to excite a far less restless disposition than mine. One of his first cases had been the defence of a man charged with killing an Indian, an added fillip to my imagination. Why not study law and become his assistant? He had not gone to school beyond the eighth grade, and I was that far along now. All he had done was to get a job in a lawyer's office and read a lot of books, then pass an examination.

It was clear that the law also had its attractions. Throughout the winter his letters, with an occasional Deadwood newspaper containing accounts of stage-robberies, troublesome Indians and

other wild-west activities, kept fanning sparks of unrest until they became a flame of discontent. At length I reached a decision. I would say nothing about it, but save money for my fare, then go to Deadwood and study law under Uncle Ike. It did not occur to me that he should be consulted.

Grandma was surprised by my industry and pleased with my exemplary conduct, but Grandfather seemed to be suspicious.

"There's something the matter with that boy," he declared one night when I gathered the eggs, filled the wood box, cleaned out the ashes and was drying the dishes, all without being reminded. "He's too damned good! He's sick, or up to some meanness."

By the middle of April the chill of winter had been tempered by lengthening days and bright spring skies, which only intensified my restlessness and strengthened my resolve to leave. Every morning a west-bound freight train stopped at the village for water. I was usually on my way to school, and its warning whistle as it neared the station thrilled me deliciously in anticipation of the time when I could join Uncle Ike.

One day we had a letter from him enclosing fifty cents for me. This, added to my savings, made almost seven dollars. There was little sleep for me that night; a sudden resolution to wait no longer kept me wide awake.

Early next morning I left home for school much as usual. I have been told that my leave-taking, while prolonged and seemingly irresolute, gave no indication that it was final. All I recall is that I cried a little after passing over the first hill and out of sight. When the train stopped I was waiting at the water tank, and when it pulled out I was aboard, hidden in an empty box-car. That evening when I should have been helping Uncle Tom with the chores I was almost across the state.

NONE of the train crew had seen me climbing into the box-car. I was not molested until late afternoon, when a brakeman pushed open the sliding door and looked in.

"What you doin' in there?" he growled. "Where you think you're goin'?"

"Deadwood."

"The hell you say! Runnin' away from home to kill some Indians, hunh? Well, climb out an' be quick about it, 'fore I come in an' throw you out. Where you git on?"

"Davenport," I replied at random. The very foundation of the structure I had planned so hopefully was beginning to crumble. That I might be put off the train at some desolate way station had not entered into my calculations, and the tears filling my eyes were not forced.

"Please, Mister. Let me ride?"

Gradually, as I developed a not entirely imaginary narrative, the brakeman's gruffness abated. "Come on back an' tell that to the con," he ordered. "But it won't do you any good."

My story must have made a good impression. After considerable grumbling the conductor allowed me to ride in the caboose until we reached Council Bluffs, even explaining to me en route the mysteries of railway timetables and maps, and filling me with baked beans at a restaurant after we arrived.

My route from there was north to Missouri Valley, thence northwest across Nebraska, then north again to Deadwood. Next day, while wandering uncertainly about the freight yards in Missouri Valley, I fell in with a shabby but soft-spoken individual, wearing a long overcoat and a ratty grey beard, who introduced me to my first so-called hobo jungle. A half-dozen or more fellow travellers were lounging around a small campfire at the edge of town, where a mixture they called a mulligan was cooking in a big rusty kettle, and some coffee simmering in an old tin can. My age and inexperience seemed to worry them; beating one's way across the country was a hazardous undertaking, they said. They cautioned me at length against the dangers and pitfalls likely to

be encountered by unprotected boys, and stressed the need of guarding any money I might have concealed about my person; few of the men I would meet on the road were to be trusted.

Meanwhile, several others had arrived, producing some bread and numerous hand-outs, which I learned was a general term for odds and ends of food they had begged. From an old canvas bag one of them brought forth tin plates and spoons, while another collected and rinsed a number of empty tin cans for the coffee.

My shabby friend with the whiskers, whom they called "The Professor," was something of a personage in jungle society. When all was ready he arose to announce the feast. "Gentlemen," he intoned solemnly, "dinner is about to be served." Then, turning to me, he continued, "When hunger savours the food, the poorest man dines well. Help yourself."

The stew may have been better than it smelled and tasted; at any rate it was hot and filling and seemed to agree with me. In a short time, droning conversation combined with the soothing processes of good digestion closed my eyes in sleep.

Towards morning the Professor awakened me. He had investigated and found a train going in my direction, ready to leave in a few minutes. He had also found a clean, empty car and would be glad to see me safely aboard.

The box-car's bare floor really did appear to be a little softer that morning, and the rapid tapping beneath me of wheels striking joints in the rails was a lively dance of propitiation for continued good luck. It was reassuring to know that western hospitality was not overrated, that even those homeless working men were willing to share with a stranger the little they had. . . . This train would carry me far on my way. At first I had been in fear my money would run out. But I was now unafraid; seven dollars would buy a lot of food. Thus far I had spent only twenty-five cents; the ferment of high adventure had taken the edge off my appetite. . . . At Council Bluffs my supper of baked beans was completely satisfying. The tramps' stew, if they were tramps, which I doubted, was not very good and had no staying quality, but I could buy sandwiches in Fremont. And perhaps a pie, which would last me to Long Pine. There I could get anything I wanted. At the rate I was going I could afford to live well; I could spend as much as fifty cents a day and still have something left when I reached Deadwood. . . .

As it had done a hundred times in the past two days, my hand

sought the little bag hanging under my shirt in which I kept my money. It was gone!

I searched myself frantically. The stout string which had held it suspended around my neck could not have broken or come untied. I had made sure of that. It reached almost to my waist and was knotted to prevent slipping over my head. Both string and bag were in place a few minutes before I had fallen asleep. There was but one explanation. Them dirty bastards had stolen all my money!

Strangely enough, among my first reactions to the stunning discovery that I had been robbed was hunger. Food had been a matter of no great interest while I had money, but now that I had none an intense craving for something to eat began tormenting me. In my mind I could see shop windows piled high with delicacies; white-capped cooks bending over steaming ranges as they dished up sizzling steaks, fried potatoes, bacon and eggs, griddle cakes and coffee. These, along with the sweet aroma of Grandma's freshly baked apple pies, which I seemed to scent from afar, suggested the advisability of turning back.

But, I reasoned, one could starve quite as quickly east-bound as west, and to go in either direction I must beg or steal. There was comfort in recalling that I knew how to beg. As a matter of fact I had begged practically everything edible to be found in Chatham Square, and a great deal that was inedible.

On the other hand, hitting the back doors, which the Professor explained was begging food at private houses, was a different proposition. One couldn't just go up and ask for something to eat; trial and error had reduced it to an exact and orderly system. The approach, he said, must be a nice blend of deliberation and deference, with an eye out for dogs. The knock also must be deferential but distinct; two or three respectful taps, then take two steps backward and stand in plain sight with hat in hand, eyes downcast, expression hopeful. All this was preparatory to facing the biddies, as he called it, who must not be alarmed or even startled. Young or old, maid or madam, expression, attitude and what he called a hot hunch, all entered into the art of making the final touch. I doubted if I could do it.

Furthermore, something queer had happened to my own attitude towards begging. Grandfather had said that stray dogs and strange beggars were both likely to bite the hand that fed them, and of the two it was clear he had more respect for dogs.

He held all beggars and tramps in aloof and suspicious contempt, claiming they were petty thieves at heart, too lazy to work and too ornery to starve. In the light of my experience I agreed with him heartily.

At Fremont, a restaurant in the railway station drew me irresistibly to the door. A moment of indecision; then, entering boldly, I marched straight back to the kitchen.

"Will you—may I wash the dishes for something to eat?" I asked the cook. Then, remembering my costly lesson, I stepped back two paces and stood in plain sight, my hat in hand, my eyes slightly downcast, trying to look hopeful.

The cook jerked his head around to look at me. "Wos at?" he demanded sharply. Eyeing me a moment, he turned to stir something on the range. "You get-a da hell outa here!" he barked. "Beat it!"

But I held my ground, and it worked. His accent had a joyously familiar sound, and when I replied in half-forgotten Spanish, his face fairly beamed as he led me to the sink. I washed dishes a few minutes while he filled a plate with left-over pieces of steak, fried potatoes, bread and butter. After storing these away I had another turn at the dishes, the cook hovering over me muttering and cackling like a mother hen. An Italian, formerly from New York, he knew his east side better than I did myself and was hungry for news. Another heaping plate of mixed desserts stuffed me to the ears. Finally, with a paper bag filled with sandwiches and pie, with a half-dollar inside my sock and a rosy outlook on life, I strolled down to the freight yards. I was still on my way to Deadwood.

My system worked beautifully all the way. In fact, it served me well for several years while taking an extensive course in migratory economics and itinerant sociology via a side-door sleeper on freight trains. It even qualified me as a contender for the amateur pearl-diving championship, as I had probably washed more dishes for less money in more restaurants in the largest number of states.

At Chadron I tried vainly for two days to catch a north-bound freight train. I had made the rounds and done my dish-washing stunt in all the restaurants in town, so must begin over again or become a cash customer, or move on. After fortifying myself internally with a huge plate of hash, and externally with an old discarded overcoat, the blind baggage on a night passenger train

was my last resort. Luck was with me. Early next morning I reached Rapid City, then the end of railway transportation.

It was impossible to beat one's way on the stage running daily from Rapid City to Deadwood, about forty miles. The driver, however, gave me a tip to catch one of the work trains running irregularly into Whitewood, thirty miles nearer my journey's end. I did, and from there I walked the remaining ten miles.

Uncle Ike had been married two days when I left Iowa. He had suspected that I might be on the way, as he knew I wanted to come, and a letter from Uncle Tom had told of my disappearance. He, therefore, was not greatly surprised when one of his wedding presents, delayed in transit and received by his bride with grave misgivings, was a very tired and hungry boy, badly in need of a bath and new clothing.

He was a gaunt, exacting man, prematurely aged, with a thin, drooping moustache, a drooping posture and a dispirited outlook on life, probably due to his restricted view-point. He was not specially pleased to see me, and at the office next day wanted to know my plans.

"I hoped you would let me work for my board, and study law."

He eyed me speculatively. "As for work, I have none. As for studying law, you are too young and unsettled. And school will be out in a week or so, till next September.

"But my wife is willing to have you help around the house and yard—for the present, anyway."

DEADWOOD! Here at last was the Wild West I had pictured in my mind, the one spot above all others to capture and hold an imagination which I soon learned was not too extravagant. Even Chatham Square on a Saturday night was not more exciting. Nearly three thousand people were wedged into a narrow valley, or canyon, surrounded by heavily timbered, egg-shaped hills, with Red Creek rushing down one side and terraced streets reached by steep wooden stairs mounting the other.

All activity gravitated into Main Street, crowded day and night with original characters now portrayed only in Hollywood. Miners and merchants, stage-drivers and bull-whackers, prospectors and trappers, cattlemen, lawyers, adventurers and remittance men, all looked and acted their parts. Fat Chinese shopkeepers stood placidly in doorways smoking long-stemmed pipes; others slithered along close to the buildings with hands tucked respectfully into sleeves, or trotted under heavy bundles of laundry or baskets of vegetables swinging from yokes across their shoulders.

But appearances were sometimes deceptive. Harmless-looking gunmen of established reputations loafed inoffensively in the street. Immaculate gamblers carried an air of keen and efficient respectability. Pretty dance-hall girls were to be identified only by their betraying rouge, and Lou Desmond, the most notorious Madam in town, carried an air of severe respectability.

Periodic warfare between swaggering, red-shirted bullies from the Homestake and De Smet gold mines and hard-boiled, hard-drinking track layers from the railroad led to innumerable fights, which no one seemed to mind until the shooting began. A fourteen-year-old feud between soldiers from Fort Meade and Indians from the reservations was smouldering ominously, giving rise to mutually hostile glances under a laboured show of indifference.

All supplies were freighted into town on great wagons trailing behind one- to five-span ox-teams. The dry, squealing axles could be heard for blocks, and were emphasized by the bull-voiced drivers cracking their enormous whips. It was said an expert could clip a fly from a bull's ear at twenty paces without touching a hair.

A large number of men carried guns in plain sight, swinging on a belt, or showing as a bulge under the left arm. Most of them wore high boots, wide-brim hats and flowing moustaches and had a quizzical, penetrating quality about their slightly closed eyes, caused, perhaps, by gazing over vast distances or into dangerous situations.

The Deadwood of 1890 was a brazen hussy, ageing but still voluptuous. While striving for respectability, she was fully aware of a wicked glamour of which she was secretly proud, and of a hectic past for which she was slightly nostalgic. One of her cherished heirlooms was the old stagecoach formerly running to and from Sidney, with a great dark stain under the seat where the driver had lain when murdered by robbers in Split Tail Gulch. The faithful horses had galloped on into town unaided and had stopped dutifully at the hotel.

Still popular was the old Bella Union dance-hall, where a man mistaken for another was shot at the door by the bartender. Owing to this unfortunate error, the killer was solemnly and officially declared not guilty of murder. An old bloodstain where a woman had been killed at the piano was still visible, and near the centre of the floor was another where a quiet stranger had stood while taking a couple of shots at a man on the stage who had stolen his wife, and who was himself shot down by the piano player.

Equally popular was Al Swearengen's Gem, best known of all the old-time western dance-halls. The Gem often cashed in five thousand dollars a night, and had more than a dozen suicides and murders charged against it. Saloons and street corners where someone had stopped a bullet were too numerous to be of interest.

Not so popular but equally interesting to me was the cemetery on Mount Moriah, where many an old-timer had found peace and, it is to be hoped, understanding. Given a prominence it merited was the grave of Wild Bill Hickok, Dodge City's famous marshal in the bad old days. With many a grudge hanging over him, he had retired to a life of comparative quietness in Deadwood, to be shot in the back while playing cards in a saloon. Calamity Jane, perhaps the town's most notorious woman, was permitted by fate to die peacefully in bed a few years later and be buried beside Wild Bill, the only man she ever loved. Another martyr to

advancing civilization was Preacher Smith, the town's first minister of the gospel, who was killed by Indians while on the way to deliver a sermon in Spearfish. And off to one side on Boot Hill were at least fifty unmarked graves of adults, all probably dead of violence. For killers and all-round bad men, Deadwood was unrivalled, even by Tombstone.

In Deadwood I saw my first blanket Indians. From time to time small parties of Sioux made their camps on a little flat below town, where I could usually be found when not in school. The older men interested me tremendously, maintaining a friendly but dignified reserve and resembling in no respect my dime novel savages. Once they understood that I, too, was alien to my surroundings, but, unlike themselves, was in a foreign land, they accepted my small offerings of candy and cigarette tobacco in return for scraps of personal and tribal information, as a fair exchange of courtesies. As a rule the men were tall, spare, smooth-faced and bowlegged. They had keen, heavy-lidded eyes, long black hair, and sharply cut features, and were clad in cotton shirts, trousers, and buckskin moccasins. In town they wore a red or blue blanket across their shoulders.

The women were shorter, fatter and round-faced, with bright black eyes and rather sullen lips, much less attractive than the men. They dressed in long, loose cotton gowns and moccasins and tied their long hair behind in a bushy queue.

Their skins were the colour of old copper and they smelled strongly of smoke. Like all Indians, they believed in the curative qualities of steam baths, prepared by pouring water over hot rocks inside a tepee. They were apparently healthy, yet never bathed for purposes of cleanliness. This struck me as an important discovery to be passed on to my new Aunt Julia, but she remained adamant in respect to my regular Saturday night routine.

To me the Indians looked harmless, but everyone feared they were going on the warpath. Uncle Ike said the trouble started when gold was first discovered in the Black Hills, which then belonged to the Sioux. Prospectors swarmed in by thousands, killed the Indians' game, crowded them out of the country.

While the Indians were being driven into a reservation which the Government had set aside for them, General Custer and his entire command had been killed. This, of course, could not be allowed to go unpunished, and there had followed fourteen years of alternating war and peace. The Sioux were never reconciled to

the loss of their lands, and the Government was unable to carry out any policy of rehabilitating them elsewhere.

Sitting Bull, the Sioux' most famous medicine man, escaped into Canada after taking part in the Custer Massacre. He had lately returned, still nursing resentment against a Government he believed had robbed his people. While in the north he had had a vision in which a Messiah remade the world and restored to the Indians their hunting grounds, conditional upon being propitiated with ritualistic songs and dances in which long cotton gowns were to be worn. These so-called ghost shirts, it was understood, would be protective against the assaults of all enemies.

According to Uncle Ike, the whole affair had been badly managed. No one seemed to realize how deeply ingrained was the Indians' mysticism, love of ceremony and faith in Sitting Bull, nor how eager they were to accept this promised wish-fulfilment. Ghost-dances with appropriate tribal songs were carried on in widely scattered localities long before their significance was suspected by indifferent public officials, who looked upon them as merely another manifestation of savage superstition.

When it finally became clear that the Indians were dancing themselves into a frenzy, in which their zeal was leading them into acts of hostility, the dances were forbidden. But it was then too late. Surrounded by guards and protected by darkness, dancing continued off the reservations. Worse still, official interference was proof to the Sioux that their Messiah was really feared by the white people.

Furthermore, some of the Indians, who had been advised to await the coming of a different Saviour, had renounced ghost-dancing. When they were enlisted as Special Indian Police and sent out to arrest their more stubbornly devout brethren, a bad matter was made worse by adding the insult of blasphemy to the injury of treason.

Shortly after Thanksgiving, Uncle Ike was called to Chadron on court matters. As he was to be gone several weeks, Aunt Julia and I were eager to go along, she to visit her people and I secretly overjoyed to be two hundred miles nearer Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, chief centre of the Sioux dissatisfaction.

We found the little prairie town, reminiscent to me of dirty dishes and my first ride on a blind baggage, to be far more turbulent than Deadwood. Rumours of hordes of painted savages

roaming the back country, stealing horses and burning houses, had multiplied and spread until they reached Washington and produced results. Word had gone out that Chadron was to be a mobilization point for soldiers, then on the way, and scores of families had moved into town for protection.

Many had brought their household effects and livestock, joining others to form a circular barricade with wagons, the centre crowded with horses, milch cows, tents, women and children. Many others were camped beside the court-house, sleeping in tents or on the floors inside, while still others moved in with friends or relatives.

A few days after we arrived we were treated briefly, but realistically, to a re-enactment of that thrilling drama in which a small isolated community is threatened by hostile Indians. Late one afternoon someone noticed a suspicious movement far to the westward which resolved into a band of horsemen. When they were identified as Indians our curiosity immediately turned into consternation. By prearrangement the fire bell summoned all men into the street, while frantic women dashed about calling their children. Guns and ammunition were rushed to strategic points where small groups had collected behind whatever cover they could improvise.

There was one real danger against which we had no adequate protection. The treeless prairie was heavily overgrown with buffalo grass that had been allowed to encroach into the streets. With no rain for months, the dry wooden houses would burn as easily as the grass. Approaching leisurely behind an advancing dust cloud which obscured their movements, the Indians could fire the grass, then attack when the town was in flames.

A hundred or more women and children had been herded into the brick schoolhouse, where they milled around like frightened sheep in a corral. A few had weapons and were determined to fight, others were offering such assurances and comfort as they could command. Many were praying, or crying hysterically, and many another was too benumbed with terror to do more than clasp her children tightly and stare with unseeing eyes at the walls.

Like others, I was horribly afraid. Formerly, taking my cue from fiction, there were no good Indians alive. But after listening to old men's tales in their camp at Deadwood and hearing murderous street talk in Chadron directed against them, I was, if anything, pro-Indian. And now, face to face with reality, when

neither excuses nor accusations mattered, when the choice lay between killing or being killed, no one was more bloodthirsty than I.

The Indians were within a short distance of town when they detoured, broke ranks and made camp for the night. They proved to be a band of about a hundred Ogalala Sioux captured by Cheyenne Indian Police while ghost-dancing. Under command of a cavalry officer they were on the way back to Pine Ridge Reservation, the men's faces still painted black below the eyes and red above. But their horses' tails were untied, showing they were not on the warpath.

Apparently none of them wanted to leave camp and no visitors were allowed inside the picket lines surrounding it. A few of us spent most of the night talking to the Cheyennes and watching the Sioux, squatting in moody silence around little campfires, seemingly resigned to accept whatever was in store for them, and breaking occasionally into plaintive chants which the Cheyennes said were peace songs. The women especially seemed entirely devoid of any feelings of guilt or remorse as they glared at us, half-fearfully, half-defiantly, like trapped creatures at bay. The Cheyennes, being neither numerous nor aggressive, had suffered no overcrowding in their small reservations. Having no serious grievances, they had not sought the intervention of a Messiah. But their sympathies were with the Sioux, whom they treated as misguided or misunderstood victims of adverse circumstances.

Pending our return to Deadwood I had entered school in Chadron, but no one gave much attention to study. The town was filled with soldiers and camp-followers, with refugees, and rumours which kept everyone on edge. In school, the least disturbance outside drew us all to the windows, and at home every ear was attuned to the slightest unusual sound. Of a night sentries were posted at half-mile intervals around town; women and children were advised to remain indoors. But life sped on at a swift pace in saloons, gambling houses and other resorts, where soldier and civilian with taut, irritable nerves caroused through the night.

By the latter part of December the end was in sight. Sitting Bull and his son had been killed, presumably while resisting arrest, and all but one of several bands of hostile Indians had returned to their reservations peacefully. Big Foot, a chief who had taken part in the Custer Massacre, was still at large with about a hundred

warriors and their families. But the Seventh Cavalry, Custer's old command, whose revenge the Indians mortally feared, was on their trail, relentlessly tightening the cordon around them. The day after Christmas we heard of Big Foot's surrender. Next day news reached us that in a fight with the Seventh Cavalry every member of his band had been killed.

Reports of the affair were conflicting. No one knew what had happened, but through them all ran one dark thread to discolour what appeared to have been a brilliant victory. It was generally understood that about two hundred women and children were in Big Foot's party. What had become of them?

Judge Burns of Deadwood was in town. When he appointed Uncle Ike and a man from Chadron as a committee to ascertain the facts, I was wild to go along. It would, of course, be useless to ask permission, but with no special orders to the contrary it might be managed. I was sure I could beat my way down to Rushville on a train. From there all supplies were carried over to the reservation by ox-teams; the committee would go by stage and I should be able to wangle a ride from a freighter.

We arrived at Rushville about midnight on the same train, the committee inside and comfortably warm, while I was outside on the blind baggage, half-frozen. After thawing out beside a stove in a livery stable, and explaining the situation to the man in charge, who himself must have been of adventurous turn, he told me a special stage for the committee would be driven to Pine Ridge by a man who formerly lived in Deadwood. They were leaving at daylight, he said, and if I were in the stable when the driver came, kept my mouth shut, and climbed aboard, he might suppose I was one of the party. Yes, he said, I could get a little sleep right there behind the stove; he would call me in time.

Next morning when the stage drove up to the hotel I was seated beside the driver, wrapped to the eyes in a borrowed buffalo-hide overcoat. None of the party paid any attention to me as they entered; the driver released his brake, yipp'eed to his leaders and we were off.

The morning was cold and grey; before noon we ran into a fierce blizzard carried in the arms of a shrieking north-east gale. A slanting screen of snow as fine as sand, and almost as hard, streaked across the prairie, swirling around every obstruction, resting a moment in each little depression, searching out every defect in our covering, every breach and aperture in the stage.

When we stopped at a ranch house for lunch and the driver said he doubted if we could continue until the storm abated, I knew that my hour had struck.

But Uncle Ike was more astounded than mad when he recognized me, and before his anger could reach the boiling point Judge Burns was conducting the inquiry. He wanted to know what prompted me to such a crazy undertaking, how I got to Rushville, who assisted me.

I still recall the judicial gravity with which he rendered his verdict when I finished. "Young man," said he, "your objective doesn't seem to have justified the means you employed, but your resourcefulness is commendable. It is the judgment of this court that you have earned permission to accompany us as an unofficial observer.

"However," he went on, his eyes twinkling, "when we get back to Chadron you will be out of my jurisdiction. Ike, here, may then have something to say to you."

As the blizzard raged all afternoon, the committee spent the time going over events leading to the Indians' uprising. The man from Chadron was in favour of their complete extermination, but Uncle Ike and the Judge, being from South Dakota, agreed that the Sioux had had a raw deal.

When Pine Ridge Reservation was allotted to the Sioux, argued the Judge, it was the Government's intention to transform them into self-supporting stockmen and farmers. But as more than three-quarters of the land was worthless for farming, and as an equal proportion of the Indians were unfitted by nature or training to operate farms, the result was inevitable. One thousand experienced white farmers couldn't exist on that land, let alone six thousand inexperienced Indians.

To keep the Sioux from outright starvation, continued the Judge, it was necessary to feed them, which the Government did by issuing beef, on the hoof, and other supplies each month. The Indians would flock to the agency on issue day, take everything offered, stuff themselves until the best of it was gone, sell what they couldn't immediately use to traders and then scatter until another issue was due.

As long as they kept quiet and peaceable this was a simple answer to the troublesome Indian Question. It ended the strain on inefficient public officials, enriched the traders, gave work for politicians in need of jobs and made room for white settlers pressing

westward to develop the country. What it did to the Indian is now obvious to us all. Lounging in his buffalo-hide tepee he finally realized he had been rooked out of his birthright. The wild game upon which he and his ancestors for many generations had lived was gone; he couldn't support himself on the barren land. Crooked officials bought inferior supplies and pocketed the difference in cost. Meat was the only food he really knew and liked; between beef issues he could eat his pony, or his dogs, and ponder what could be done about it.

"And no one could do anything about it," concluded the Judge. "They had no friends, no money, and what's more important, no votes. I made two trips to Washington myself and predicted what would happen. But I didn't get anywhere."

We reached Pine Ridge Agency, administrative centre of Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, before noon on the third day after the battle at Wounded Knee Creek. A pall of smoke from hundreds of campfires had settled over the valley, muffling harsh noises and screening ruthless necessities of war, as indeed it was, with eight thousand soldiers opposed to five thousand Indians.

While the committee talked to the Indian Agent and some cavalry officers, I strayed among the Indians. Many of them were friendly, or possibly reconciled, and were holding councils in dozens of tepees, arguing, explaining, pleading with others not yet willing to submit. Many were distinctly hostile, and armed guards were posted at every building and at short distances among the tepees. Troops surrounded the entire encampment, yet a number of infuriated Indians succeeded in breaking through the guards while we were there. As they dashed for the Bad Lands and liberty, ten or fifteen miles north, hundreds of squaws set up a wild tremolo accompanied by innumerable yelping dogs and braying mules, hushed momentarily by bursts of rifle fire. No one knew, or cared, how many thus attempting to escape were killed. I saw the floor of a church and a school packed with wounded. Dozens of others were lying on blankets outside. Squaws were wailing for the dead in tepees on every side.

Later in the afternoon a number of officers and the Agent went with us over to Wounded Knee Creek, fifteen miles away. Drifted snow covered the ground, concealing much which no doubt were better left to the imagination. No guards were on duty there, none were necessary. An old trading post off to one side was abandoned. In all that frozen solitude no living creature but ourselves could be

seen. Dead horses, blankets and personal effects were scattered everywhere. Many tepees had blown down, others were standing stark and cold, or leaning drunkenly with the wind. Long gaping slashes in their walls and dark figures lying singly and in heaps among them told a tragic story. Someone counted more than a hundred adult bodies and those of twenty-odd children lying in the snow.

An officer stated that the Indians returned at night to search for and carry away those whom they found still alive, that others had been taken to the Agency along with wounded soldiers, that still others had feigned death to stab those about to aid them. How anyone could have survived in such circumstances was a mystery until a grizzled cavalryman explained.

"A bellyful of hot lead kept the bastards warm," he said.

Shortly before we left the battlefield, the committeeman from Chadron found a little girl about a year old, alive and unhurt, tucked between two dead women. Someone, evidently, had wrapped her in blankets, possibly the night before; then, becoming alarmed, had made off without her. She made no sound as she was lifted from her gruesome bed, but when she saw we were not her people she began whimpering weakly. A friendly squaw at the Agency changed her clothing and the man took her with him back to Chadron, where, I heard later, she was adopted into a white family.

An official list of casualties at the battle of Wounded Knee, the last battle in the last Indian war, gave the number of soldiers killed as 25, wounded, 35; Indian men killed, 85; women killed, 65; children, 20. A squad of soldiers was sent over to dig a long trench for the dead; the agent in charge of the reservation lost his job. The commanding officer of troops engaged was called to Washington, where he justified his drastic measures. Big Foot and his band had been exterminated; at last General Custer was avenged.

What had really happened to that little Indian girl? How well had she adjusted herself to the new life resolving from such tragic circumstances? The question occurred to me from time to time over a period of many years, but it was not until 1940 that it was convenient to find the answer. Last September my wife and I drove east by way of the Black Hills and Chadron, where not more than a dozen old residents of the town recalled the circum-

stances. But nearly everyone knew the pretty Indian girl who had grown up in their midst, graduated from high school and married a rather prominent young man. The last heard from them they were living in Kansas City.

Continuing on to Pine Ridge, we followed the same general route taken by the stage that wintry morning when I was en route to my first battlefield. The Agency, which I had carried in my mind as a smoky village swarming with wild Indians and hard-boiled soldiers, was now a peaceful cluster of Government buildings with few Indians in sight. A large modern hospital sat on the bluff across the river, up which I had watched frantic Indians dashing in attempts to escape, some of whom were killed in the attempt.

Next morning we drove over to Wounded Knee Creek. On the same knoll above the trading post where we had stood, surrounded by the stark debris of battle, was a tall granite shaft, erected and paid for by the Sioux in commemoration of what they still claimed was an unjustifiable slaughter. Three sides of the monument were filled with names of men lying under the hundred-foot-long, rock-bordered grave before it, and on one side was graven a grim and eloquent epitaph:

"Here on Dec. 29, 1890, these and many other innocent men, women, and children were massacred by Col. Forsythe and the Seventh Cavalry."

THE first through passenger train reached Deadwood the same day the Seventh Cavalry settled its score with the Sioux at Wounded Knee. Each event marked the passing of an era. Realizing that their fighting days were over, the Indians licked their wounds in gloomy resignation and laid down their arms for all time. And in Deadwood the old melodramatic stagecoach days moved into the background as the railroad drew near. With its arrival they all but disappeared from the scene. New actors mounted the stage, new lines were rehearsed. Henceforth a strange and critical audience, unaccustomed to rough-and-ready improvisation, would attend the performance. The rowdy little mining camp must put on a more conventional show.

The hoyden problem child of the West was already showing signs of approaching maturity when we returned. She was, in effect, lowering her skirts, assuming a mincing gait and cultivating a self-conscious decorum in keeping with her new responsibilities. It was no longer good form to wear a gun on Main Street, the subject of law and order was discussed, there was talk of enforcing prohibition. Several gamblers were arrested and one of them was prosecuted, unsuccessfully. A number of respected citizens were keeping an eye on incoming trains, and a few left town suddenly for parts unknown. Lou Desmond moved her notorious establishment across the creek. As a further mark of reformation, an effort was made to confine undue hilarity, after midnight, to a region known as the Bad Lands.

Above Main Street social distinctions between stage-coach old-timers and railroad newcomers were being drawn, provisionally but determinedly; unknown upstarts must be kept in their places. Judge Burns made news by showing up one Sunday morning in a brand new plug hat, and the Big Horn Trading Post made history by advertising an enormous sale, at ruinous prices, then changed itself into the town's first department store.

But there were reactionaries, then as now, unwilling to adjust themselves to a changing world. Old Billie McGee expressed their sentiments when he rustled a grubstake and took to the hills.

"This ole camp ain't what she use to be no more," he complained. "An' I'm a-gettin' out. A feller can't spit nowadays thout hittin' somebody's foot."

With the approach of spring I, too, felt seasonal stirrings of unrest. Since early fall I had been averaging five hours a week on Cooley's "Law of Torts," a musty volume upon which Uncle Ike had cut his legal teeth, therefore recommended to me. This, in addition to my school work, was a tough assignment. But with the aid of a dictionary whose definitions shed no light on Cooley's abstractions, I waded through to the end, gaining very little understanding of, and losing considerable enthusiasm for, the law. Therefore, after a quiz which embarrassed me no less than it vexed Uncle Ike, he reaffirmed his doubts as to whether I had a legal mind. But as a further test he started me on Blackstone's "Commentaries."

Uncle Ike had a narrow, greedy mind, a plodding disposition, a passionate regard for facts and small respect for public opinion, which, he affirmed, was usually wrong. When he guessed or supposed it was usually in the negative, and when he took anything for granted it was always conditional. But when he said this or that is so, it was so, any evidence to the contrary being declared to be untrustworthy, misleading or indefinite. Argumentative to the marrow of his bones, when callers were present of an evening he used Aunt Julia as a stooge to develop his theories. I was never sure whether these were the outcroppings of innate perversity, or if he argued merely for practice.

Having studied his jurisprudence the hard way, alone by candlelight after working long hours on the farm, he was a strong advocate of the inviolability of precedent. He claimed to have no patience with scatter-brains, looking at me, or with what he called modern education, meaning the schools. The former, he argued, could not be taught anything worth while and the latter employed itself extravagantly to no effective ends. It was the single-track mind, he asserted, centred on one objective and operating preferably in solitude, that gathered exact knowledge. When this, in turn, was directed to a single end and well mixed with good honest sweat, it assured success.

To this and a great deal more in similar vein I had listened meekly and often, but without being greatly impressed. In school I was dipping into a number of subjects in which Uncle Ike was painfully deficient. I was not only tired of his smug platitudes, I

was beginning to feel that he himself could do with a little more extra-legal learning, especially in the use of double negatives and the pronunciation of common words—he still clung to his father's Kentucky dialect. Nor could I see anything in his daily grind to indicate he had found great success or even happiness in his single-mindedness. And furthermore, Blackstone, as far as I could make out, was worse than Cooley. Neither had what I called a single-track mind, or said much of anything about practising law.

Life, I was beginning to realize, was a pretty serious business, and on the whole very unsatisfactory. Instead of becoming more simple, it was daily growing more and still more complex. In comparison with the problems of seasoned maturity such as now confronted me, those of childhood had indeed been carefree and trifling.

I was in the throes of a tremendous cultural and emotional upheaval. Unsuspected by me, but owing, of course, to Uncle Ike's position in Deadwood, I had been invited to numerous house parties where swearing was taboo, to social gatherings where tobacco-chewing and slang were not rated desirable accomplishments. Also for the first time within my memory I had gone to church, attended Sunday school, overheard polite conversation, witnessed gracious manners. And in the process of adjusting myself to these conventions I had fallen head over heels in love.

It was strictly a one-sided affair, born in deepest secrecy and nurtured, at a respectful distance, in all the yearning hopes, fears and plans known to fifteen-year-old adolescence. She sat across the aisle from me in school, a sprightly lass about my age with roguish black eyes and an eager smile which, when tossed in my direction, always reduced me to confused and clammy stupidity.

I was far more at ease when stealing glances at the graceful curve of her lips, admiring her smooth creamy skin, pondering the amazing fact of her nearness. Gradually I managed to speak to her without stammering, to carry her books and eventually to name her in the old game of post-office, played at parties in a darkened room off the parlour. After a few proper squeals as the door closed behind us, she struggled a moment, then gave up. But I could never muster enough courage to go through with it. The best I could do was to peck awkwardly at an ear; to kiss her would have been a desecration.

Instructive, agreeable, and yet tormenting as they were, none of these activities tended to clarify Blackstone's obscurities, but rather to darken the horizon with reminders of a past I had tried to forget.

In Iowa, Grandfather neither knew nor cared anything about the Bowery as a place of residence for homeless boys. He was satisfied with the essential facts as given in a memorandum accompanying me—name, age, no known relatives, health excellent, disposition tractable. We would, he said, forget the past and look to the future. Some day he would put through a legal adoption. Nearly everyone there knew, or could easily find out, almost as much about my past as I knew myself, and after the first few months no one, aside from Grandma, cared who or what I was or had been.

But it was different here. Everyone I knew in Deadwood had parents, or at least family ties of some sort giving them what was termed a background. When this word was whispered confidentially by elderly ladies, after glancing at me, it gave me a chill. It seemed to have a great deal to do with respectability.

Uncle Ike had allowed the relationship implied in the title to stand; I was presumed to be his nephew. But questions came up from time to time as to where and how I fitted into his family. My name, and in moments of forgetfulness my accent, was foreign. To remedy this defect and at the same time gain favour in my girl friend's eyes, I determined to construct a background into which I could fit myself creditably.

Had I gone about the matter temperately it might have worked. But once under way my imagination knew no bounds. It turned out a masterpiece of incredibility which, unfortunately, could be understood to carry a slight reflection on Aunt Julia. More unfortunately still, the girl friend promptly confided the secret to her mother, who with equal promptness spread her own version of the story.

Final examinations were under way; I was finishing my first year at high school. My time was completely occupied, yet I noticed that at home something had gone amiss. Within the house was a restraint bordering on coolness. Nothing was said about it, but Aunt Julia carried the air of long-suffering martyrdom, while Uncle Ike was even more grim and close-mouthed. The day after school closed he called me to his office. His voice was firm and frosty as he began.

"After a year's observation, I'm still of the opinion you are too young and flighty for the law, or for anything else here in Deadwood."

I saw the hard lines around his mouth tighten and wondered what was coming next.

"What you need," he went on, "is four or five years on the farm where your inventive faculties will have plenty of space to function without getting you into trouble. So I'm sending you back to Father today.

"Here's your railroad ticket to Iowa, and five dollars expense money. Julia has packed your things. The train leaves in an hour."

He left no opening for explanations or apology. There was nothing for me to say, nothing to do but go.

AS the train rattled out of Deadwood and on down grade into a deepening twilight, my grand illusion merged with the surrounding hills and faded into black discouragement. I was very unhappy in the conviction I always had been misunderstood, that I was now deeply wronged. In one respect only was I in perfect accord with Uncle Ike. Cooley, followed by Blackstone, had chilled my interest in the law until it was down to absolute zero. I had been planning to find a gold mine. I had already been making overtures to an old prospector who promised to take me out with him when school closed. And now they were sending me back to Iowa!

I curled up on a seat with my head resting on the valise Aunt Julia had packed for me, too resentful to examine its contents, too miserable to think of sleeping. What was the use trying to be good? When we came back to Chadron I had even quit smoking, but I'd certainly get me some cigarettes tomorrow. And a plug of Star, too. To hell with all of them!

Now, if he had only given me a chance to talk matters over. But they just wanted to get rid of me, so used a little harmless gossip as an excuse. Therefore nothing I could say would have done any good. Even if I hadn't made up that story, which was never intended to be passed around town, they would have found something else. . . .

Not more than two or three passengers were in the car when we left Deadwood, but when I awakened next morning nearly all the seats were occupied. During the night we had passed out of the mountains and hills patched with scrubby timber. We were now on the prairie where an occasional naked butte stood in solitary grandeur, perhaps brooding over the great herds of antelope and buffalo it had seen fattening on the rich grasslands. Opposite me were two elderly, dressed-up Indians and a boy about my size who watched me furtively. Digging into memories of the previous summer, I found a greeting.

"Wah seecha wah soc?" I ventured.

Startled, the boy grinned, and the men stared at me sus-

piciously. Then one of them replied at length, forcing me to admit I had just about exhausted my Sioux vocabulary.

But it served as an introduction. Talking through the boy, who spoke a little Mission English, I learned they were on the way from Pine Ridge to Washington to protest against insufficient food and to give their side of the Wounded Knee affair. When I convinced them I had seen that battlefield while the dead were still lying as they fell, traditional Indian reserve gave way to eager curiosity. They wanted to know every detail. Why we went, who was in the party, what they said, how many dead Indians we counted, how many soldiers were killed, what became of the baby.

One of the two men had been wounded in that battle, shot in a shoulder while mounting his pony. He had crawled behind a rock, where he lay all day, not daring to move. The soldiers were killing all the wounded, he said. One of them came up, kicked him on the chin, then passed on, thinking he was dead. Late that night the Indian made his way back to the Agency.

Young as I was, I could appreciate the control over his nerves a wounded man must have to lie quietly in the snow while a mortal enemy, after kicking him in the face, watched for the slightest sign of life.

I wanted to go with them to Washington, being sure my description of the battlefield would add weight to their account of the battle. But after talking it over among themselves they decided an outsider of my age might do more harm than good.

There was an interesting sequel to this chance meeting on the train. Years later at the Explorers' Club I met Yellow Robe, a Sioux then living in New York. While talking over old times in the Black Hills he told me that he had been in the battle at Wounded Knee, that his mother and uncle were killed there. According to him it was a planned and deliberate massacre. Big Foot, he said, had surrendered to Cheyenne Indian Police with the promise that if he gave up his guns they would take his party back to Pine Ridge Agency and give them food; they had been forced to eat their spare ponies for the past week or so and were half-starved.

Escorted by the Cheyennes, Big Foot's party reached Wounded Knee Creek late in the afternoon, and found nearly a thousand soldiers waiting for them. When the Sioux were ordered to dismount and make camp, they feared they were in for a fight,

seventh Cavalry, Custer's old command. So the word was passed around to make a dash for the Agency at the first indication of trouble.

During the night their ponies had strayed. Early next morning Yellow Robe and his father went out to find them, leaving his mother and uncle to break camp. While they were gone the soldiers swarmed into the Sioux' camp, began throwing things out of the tepees looking for guns. One of them struck a woman, someone fired a shot, the slaughter began, and ended only when all the Sioux in sight had been killed.

Yellow Robe and his father heard the firing and crept to a ledge overlooking the camp. Then, as they were unarmed, they dashed away to the Agency for help. He said that out of about two hundred and forty Sioux at Wounded Knee that morning not more than two dozen escaped, and half of those were wounded.

When he mentioned going to Washington the following summer with his father and another Indian, to lay their claims before the Government, we began comparing notes in earnest. He had no difficulty recalling the white boy they had met on the train in Nebraska, who addressed him in the only four Sioux words he knew.

Next evening, while waiting in the railroad station at Omaha, occurred one of those small, fortuitous events designed by fate to change the entire course of a life. There had been a fire in a hotel with the loss of several lives, and a moon-faced newsboy with an armful of papers was trying vainly to call attention to an extra edition. During the ten or fifteen minutes I watched him standing listlessly against a wall, his squeaky sing-song voice lost in the shuffling crowd, he sold exactly two papers. It was painful to see a noble profession thus humbled, a golden opportunity wasted. Finally I could stand the agony no longer. My train was due, but on a quick impulse I offered to sell his papers if he stood guard over my valise.

Uncle Ike, Grandfather and the farm in Iowa were forgotten. With a fat bundle under my arm, and a disastrous fire to speed their sale, the zest for action was racing through my veins. Had I lost the knack of stopping them in their tracks, I wondered, with the good old raucous cry I had not heard in years?

In all modesty I can say I put on a good show, and I've no doubt a number of passengers missed their trains while watching me darting through the crowd, delivering a genuine east side newspaper sales talk such as many of them had never heard before. In a few minutes I had sold all the papers and was back for more. The boy came to life, hurried across the street to a news-stand for a new supply. I decided then and there that Omaha was the place for me.

Selling papers in Omaha was nice work. In a week or so I was steeped in luxury on an income of more than a dollar a day. I also bore a good many battle-marks and faced a probability of adding to their number each afternoon. When I showed up on Farnam Street I was sure of having one or more fights with local newsboys unwilling to divide the business with a stranger. Twice the police took a hand in the feud, and each time I was saved trouble by approximating the truth; I showed them my half-used railroad ticket as proof that I was not a tramp, and added the fiction of having my family's permission to earn money to complete my education.

One evening a sign in an employment office window called for mule-skimmers in Wyoming. Wages, thirty dollars a month, transportation free. It was an intriguing proposition. Why should they send men away out there to skin some mules? A little cautious inquiry in the street revealed that it was a railroad job. They wanted men to drive teams of mules hitched to spoon-shaped scrapers, which were filled with earth, then dragged to wherever wanted and dumped. It was easy; anyone could do it who knew how to drive.

In Iowa I had learned a little about driving horses hitched to a wagon; Wyoming was one of the places I had in mind to see at some future date. Approaching the man in charge, I asked for a job, asserting confidently that I had spent practically all my life behind a team of mules.

"Oh, yeh? Ever do anything else?" he asked, without much show of interest.

"Well, I've been driving a bull-team between Deadwood and Whitewood until the railroad came in and took away all the freight."

He looked at me incredulously. "Fer-cri-sake! How old are you, anyway?"

"I'll soon be eighteen." In the circumstances it didn't seem

necessary to allow a couple of years to stand between me and a job.

Leaning over a desk and tapping his teeth with a pencil, he scanned a list of names; then, turning to me doubtfully, he said, "Okay, Kid, yer on. But I still think yer lyin'. The fee's five dollars here an' now an' the train leaves at eight in the morning. What's yer name?"

Thus my first job as a man among men. It was with a feeling of complete maturity that I stepped outside, gave my pants a reassuring hitch, bit off a fresh chew of Star and swaggered down the street.

There were fifteen men in the party next morning, ranging in ages from a scant sixteen to a lenient fifty, all of them bearing more or less descriptive names. I immediately became, and was thereafter known as, The Kid. The oldest was called Pop. Among others I recall Fat, Red, Limpy, and Mex.

On the train one of them, Missouri, gave me the low-down on mule-skinning. The camp-boss, he said, judged a driver by the care he gave his team, but the men themselves passed judgment largely on the skill with which a driver threw a line, meaning the use of one of the extra long driving lines as a whip. A skilled line-thrower could break a beer bottle at twenty feet with a line, or could touch up a lagging mule's rump without leaving a mark on the skin. To cut the skin meant a call-down from the boss. Missouri stressed the importance of never eating or resting until I had taken care of my team, and of never crowding the team ahead of me. Speeding up the line of scrapers was the one unpardonable sin sure to get me in bad with the men. Aside from these points there didn't seem to be much to learn.

The camp was near Laramie, where a long wooden trestle was to be filled. We found a number of tents in a fine grove of pines beside a creek; the one in which we were to sleep had a double row of canvas cots and a few empty boxes to sit on, another served as kitchen and dining-room, another sheltered the mules, still another provided quarters for the boss and his wife. They, with the cook, blacksmith, roustabout, and three married mule-skinners were on the job when we came, the latter living in tents a short distance off to one side.

For years they had made their homes in railroad grading camps. One of them had a family of four children, enjoying rugged health and perhaps a growing mentality which might fit

them for something better in the years to come. At the moment they had no greater worries than food, shelter, and the next job.

Arising at six o'clock, we gobbled a hearty breakfast, hitched up and were at work at seven. Dinner was served at noon. Quitting work at six, we had supper, then loafed around the camp until bedtime. In the intervals we fed, watered and curried mules, mended harness, practised throwing a line, washed our shirts in the creek, cut each other's hair. A few of us found a little time for reading and we all talked a lot.

Mules, jobs, travel and prostitutes divided honours as subjects for discussion. As most of the men were experienced in all these matters, they bragged with candour and conviction of what they had seen, heard, done, and hoped to do. Pay-day, what to do with our money and where to spend the winter were topics of interest among the less experienced or more circumspect among us.

More than half the men in camp were hobos, and to my surprise they thought rather well of the appellation. It was hoodlums, not tramps, they asserted, who had robbed me in the Missouri Valley jungle; genuine hobos were seldom thieves; in a pinch they might beg something to eat, but they were more or less honest working men with itching feet which kept them on the move. And having a positive aversion to paying railroad fares, they beat their way on trains.

Both passenger and freight trains, I learned, afforded a variety of accommodations. Rated as standard were the empty box-cars, known as side-door sleepers; on a fast through train they became strictly first class. Cattle cars, especially on slow trains, were decidedly third class, patronized chiefly by low-grade tramps making short jumps from town to town. Between these extremes were the bumpers, at the ends of the cars, and the rods and brake beams underneath, to be used in emergencies. Passenger trains were practicable only at night. One could ride on the front platform of the first car behind the engine, called the blind-baggage, or on top of a car, or on the rods beneath, but they were cold, dusty, and dangerous. A hobo's prestige was raised by distances travelled between jobs, and professional standing was endangered, if not lost, by stopping more than a month or so in one state.

Despised by hobos were tramps, friendless outcasts and wanderers who never worked, but walked from town to town,

hanging around railroad yards and begging when they couldn't steal. And hobos were merely tramps who still made some slight claim to respectability. They seldom worked and lacked enough energy to move about, therefore remained more or less stationary from sheer inertia. They also lived by begging and stealing, often from friends.

The gradation of caste among itinerants, and a slight insight into the minds and dispositions of men and mules, which had several traits in common, was gained while on my first job among them both. When we finished filling the trestle in October the camp prepared to move to another job farther up the line. I had saved about fifty dollars, an amount far above anything I had ever possessed before; what to do with it was giving me considerable concern. I could stay with the outfit and earn more money or go back to Iowa and surprise Grandma with my riches.

But since the first chilly nights and frosty mornings gave notice of colder days to come, another choice was gaining favour in my mind. Missouri, an enthusiastic and inveterate hobo, was heading south to El Paso, thence east or west as prospective jobs, weather conditions, inclination, and fate ordained. His suggestion that my education should be extended by a year or so of travel was in line with my own half-formed resolve.

When he offered me a personally conducted tour throughout the length and breadth of the land, free of cost, via what amounted to a private car on a freight train, the die was cast. We started on a leisurely journey in search of jobs, scenery, climate and points of mutual interest which carried me several times across the United States, both laterally and longitudinally, over a period of three years. We spent our winters in New Orleans and along the Gulf, moving northward in the spring and either east or west as chance and impulse dictated. One could always find work on the river boats, or levee, or railroad, or follow the harvests, or in logging camps, or in a pinch on a farm. One winter in Mobile I learned something about house painting, and one summer I was with Ringling's circus, taking care of some trained dogs. All in all, it was an interesting school of experience.

WHEN I was nineteen years old the idea of studying medicine was first presented to me, but the circumstances were not auspicious. On a rainy night in September I was in St. Louis on my way south for the winter. While waiting at the foot of the bridge to catch a freight train across the Mississippi River, I noticed a well-dressed man reeling towards me, obviously very drunk. Drunken men and women, too, were familiar objects along the river front; what drew and held my attention was this man's appearance of respectability, and his efforts to maintain his balance while holding a top coat folded across one arm, and keep in place with the other hand a top hat which constantly slipped to one side.

As he approached the bridge he would pause, evidently to call up his reserves of equilibrium, lurch forward under diminishing control until about to fall, then collect himself to repeat the performance. When he reached the bridge proper, where paving between the railroad ties ended, his progress grew even more difficult. Beside the rails ran a narrow board walk guarded on the outside by a high iron railing. He staggered on a few paces clinging to this support, then gave up the effort and crumpled down, his legs hanging precariously over the bridge's edge.

His situation was extremely dangerous. He could slide under the railing and fall into the river, or slump backward and be killed by a passing train. But one of the first lessons I had learned was that it was seldom unwise to hold my tongue and mind my own business. And in the eyes of the police a hobo could have no legitimate business in that part of town after midnight with a well-dressed drunk. Nevertheless I sidled up to him, keeping in the shadows.

"Need any help, mister?" I volunteered.

He scowled at me, still holding fast to the stanchion. "Where am I? Help me out of here."

There was no great difficulty getting him to his feet, but his legs could scarcely bear his weight. It took all my strength to half-drag, half-lead him back to the street.

"Who are you?" He peered into my face, then braced himself and set his hat firmly. "Never mind now; take me home. Call a cab, that's a good boy. Take me home."

A policeman stepped from a sheltering doorway, marched ominously towards us swinging his club. "What's goin' on here?" he demanded.

Now I'm in for it, I thought. Might have known better than fool around with a drunk this time of night. The best I'll get out of this is a chance to explain to the judge after a night in jail.

But the man brightened up. His legs were not yet of much use to him without additional support, although his mind was clear. "It's all right, Chief," he said. "This lad's taking me home. Call a cab, will you?"

The cop swung his eyes from me to the man. "So it's you, is it? An' still drunk? Look at you, wet as a rat. Now listen, Doc, you get off the street an' stay off or I'll run you in, damme if I don't!" He blew his whistle; a cab drove up. "Now get in, the both of you, an' stay in till you get home. Understand?"

Evidently the cab driver knew his fare; we jogged along out Washington Avenue, the Doc huddled in a corner, while I wondered who he was. Must be an important man, I decided. Anyway, I was safe. The police had ordered me to take him home. I hoped he would arouse himself enough to give me a dollar or so, and that the driver would take me back to the bridge.

But when we stopped at a large brisk house sitting behind a low hedge, the Doc awakened, insisted I help him inside, stay the night. He was not the man to forget a friend, he said. Tomorrow he would talk with me.

A single gas-light was burning in the hall. Presently a very big, very black woman loomed in the darkness bearing a lighted candle, a red bandanna tied around her head. Her size and bearing were impressive, and the whites of her eyes glistening beneath the ends of the kerchief, which stood upright like little horns, made her an object of fearsome portent. Scolding and grumbling with a great show of anger, she led the way upstairs to the Doc's room, folded back the bedding, then, unmindful of his protests, we bundled him into bed.

"They's another bed in yonder, white boy," she said, indicating an open doorway, "eff yo'r stayin'."

The Doc slept until late afternoon, giving me time to look

about the premises. It was the most pretentious establishment I had ever seen, beautifully furnished, with a library of nearly five thousand volumes. Some were in French, some in Latin and Greek, many others were in German. I found several dozen I had read, probably a hundred I wanted to read, and many hundreds more I had never heard of. It was astonishing to find so many fine books in a private house. He must, indeed, be a very great man.

His household consisted of Belle, the big and competent housekeeper, her coffee-coloured daughter, Susie, and a younger black girl called Jen. Henry, an old negro coachman, and Joe, a German gardener, had rooms above the stable. In the stalls was a team of spirited and perfectly matched white horses. Four sleek, spotted Dalmatians trotted up to sniff me suspiciously, then trotted back to stretch themselves in the sun.

That evening in the library I met a personage bearing little resemblance to the drunk and bedraggled Doc of the night before. In dressing-gown and slippers, a distinguished-looking man of middle age with large dark eyes and greying sideburns lounged on a sofa before the fire, smoking a fragrant cigar. Offering one to me, which I refused, preferring to roll a cigarette, he looked me over a moment, then began:

"Thanks for last night. Now what can I do for you in return?"

I was now sure I would get some money. How much would it be? Five dollars perhaps, or ten? Possibly twenty-five. He must be very rich. But, I reflected, the rich are not necessarily generous, or even grateful. Still, I had saved his life, or at least helped him out of a tight spot. I must contrive to remind him of that.

"The bridge was slippery all right," I recalled. "I thought sure you'd go overboard before I could pull you out. It's lucky I was there waiting for a freight—I mean a train—but it wasn't very important; I mean I had nothing important to do."

There was a glint of satisfaction, or amusement, in his melancholy eyes as he stared at me. "I've no doubt some of my esteemed colleagues would say you did nothing important while waiting. Quite the contrary."

His gaze was sharp and penetrating, but had a quality of eager expectancy. "Tell me all about yourself. Why were you there? Where were you going on a freight, or rather on a train?"

Like the practised inquisitor he was, he led me on and on until there was little more to tell. He himself had travelled widely, but

not in box-cars. He never thought much of tramps, he said, although he'd not met any of them personally.

But I was not a tramp, I interrupted quietly. Just a hobo, a distinction with a very decided difference which I attempted to make clear to him. Hobos earned their living, usually on short jobs where there was not enough local labour: jobs which had to be done right then and there. How could the big wheat farmers in Kansas and Dakota, the fruit and vegetable growers all over the country, harvest their crops without a supply of extra labour the very day or week they needed it? They notified employment offices in the cities; we drifted in, did the job, drifted out again.

He kept on questioning me, in a manner which called for more than simple answers. Oh, I'd been on the road since I was about sixteen, about three years. I was alone after the first year; it was a lot better travelling by myself. There was no one to boss me around and tell me what to do and where to go. Yes, I'd stopped a week at Grandfather's last summer. Just couldn't stand it there any longer. Too quiet. Went back to New York, too, but didn't like it there either. The west and south-west suited me fine, especially Arizona and Oregon. . . .

Yes, I'd been in jail, often. Maybe a dozen times in as many states. But not for stealing, I added. Vag'd, they called it. The cities were not so bad, but some of the hick towns in the East were terrible. Especially after election. New officials thought they had to make a good showing, so they'd pick up some hobos and throw them into jail overnight. Next morning the judge would say, "Five dollars, or two hours, or ten days," meaning that if we were broke we had that long to get out of town, or that many days in the can. I supposed they thought if they kept us on the move and infested us with their lice we would be able to lead a better life.

Sure I worked, when I needed money or clothes; I could always wash dishes in a restaurant for something to eat. Oh, I'd done a lot of things. Followed the harvests, painted houses, worked in lumber camps, factories, on river steamboats, in a coalmine, a brickyard, on the levee, in a packing house, sawmills, a cattle ranch, hotels, with a circus, at the Chicago Fair. My last job was skinning mules up near Kansas City. I was on my way to New Orleans now. . . .

No, I confessed, I never bothered with baggage. I used to pick up a few things when I held down a job several months, but it

was too much trouble taking care of them. No use being a hobo if you couldn't pull out when you pleased, and you couldn't hop a freight with a lot of junk; you've got to travel light if you want to get anywhere. And you can take better care of what you have if it's always on you.

"Do you mean to say you carry on your person everything you possess?" he asked incredulously.

"Sure. I've got it all right here. . . . Well, if you're interested I don't mind. Let's see: two pair of pants, three shirts, a tie, cap, two pair of socks, coat, shoes, handkerchief, a razor on a thong under my shirt, soap, brush, comb, pencil, knife, matches, tobacco, cigarette papers, and a bag of savadilla powder to ward off lice."

"But you can't keep up this sort of thing all your life," he objected. "How about settling down, getting a home, making some money, friends?"

"Oh, I've got that all figured out. When I get fed up with travelling I'm going to start a little bookstore in some nice town, second-hand at first, then build it up to something big. And then I can make friends. As for money, I usually have a little in my sock for emergencies. And when I need more I'll go to work."

This was an indiscretion I immediately regretted. How could I expect even five dollars, telling him I wasn't broke?

It must have been near midnight when he unlocked a cabinet, brought out a bottle of wine. Not for himself, he asserted, but for me. He was through with the stuff.

It was the first sherry I had ever tasted, and one taste was all I wanted. Would I have whisky? Or perhaps beer? He was surprised that none of them appealed to me; habits of temperance, he said, were unusual in the sort of life I described. How did I explain that?

I was no longer in the mood to explain anything; I wanted to be on my way. Why, I wondered, was he stalling? Was he or was he not going to give me anything? He stood resting an elbow on the mantel, shifting his gaze between me and the wine. When he spoke it was my turn to be astonished.

"I gather you are fond of books; would you be interested in a job classifying and cataloguing my library? I understand that you have had no experience in work of this sort; therefore you have none of the conventional ideas as to how it should be done. So you should be willing to do it my way without argument."

I gasped, then felt myself beaming as he went on: "The pay will be the same you earned skinning mules, and I may have something else for you later, if you make good."

Such was my meeting with Dr. Wilberforce Moffett, one-time highly respected physician, surgeon, gentleman. Now, as I was to learn, a confirmed dipsomaniac, an advertising specialist in venereal diseases; therefore despised by his colleagues and outcast from the medical profession.

ON a prominent corner near Fifth and Olive Streets a large sign proclaimed the offices of Dr. Jordan, World Famous Specialist in Chronic Diseases. Consultation Free. Above the wording was a picture of a distinguished individual with flowing sideburns, long wavy hair, high collar and bow tie, purporting to give some idea of the renowned Dr. Jordan's personal appearance. It was an equally good likeness of Dr. Wilberforce Moffett.

Identical signs could be found in a dozen or more cities in 1895: each advertising the ubiquitous Dr. Jordan, each managed by a local representative. Managers were required to possess a valid licence to practise medicine, sideburns, a gift of salesmanship, willingness to sign an iron-bound contract and ability to furnish a substantial bond. Other qualifications may have been desirable, but were not necessarily indispensable. The several offices were in fact rented and furnished by an authentic Dr. Jordan, but were operated independently under a fee-splitting system, which in the case of Dr. Moffett amounted to half the collections.

The *modus operandi* was highly effective for the purpose intended—namely, to awaken a prospective patient's interest, put him at ease, allay his distrust, then frighten him thoroughly. After, the doctor himself instilled hope and inspired confidence, and after the necessary financial arrangements were made, treatment was commenced. In so far as Dr. Moffett was concerned it was successful, to the extent of giving him an income of from three to five hundred dollars a week.

At his offices there were no seats in the reception hall. This was in charge of a motherly but very astute coloured woman whose duty it was to separate unwelcome goats from welcome sheep. The former, being immediately shunted into a side room, could await the doctor's convenience or, if they tired waiting, could pass through a side door to the stairs.

Sheep also were segregated. Repeaters were taken directly to one of several treatment rooms to wait their turns, while new patients were shown deferentially into a cheerful, comfortably

No callers came to the house, yet he was by nature convivial and hungered for friendship or perhaps companionship. This was indicated by his attitude towards me, an unpromising stranger. I was, however, an attentive listener.

During the cycles of his convalescence he drank nothing stronger than coffee, but this was no adequate substitute for the potent draught his system craved. Upon recovering from the inevitable hangover he immediately began suffering increasingly frequent moments of deep abstraction alternating with unrest. He would then stare blankly into the fire or through a window, or at an unopened book, then pace the floor, romp with the dogs, start a game of solitaire or play the piano. The ever-present conflict between desire and self-denial, in which he knew desire would win, was nearing a crisis, giving him a dread of being alone, but no great wish to talk. Sometimes we would walk the streets until long after midnight without speaking.

Desire always did win, usually with a glass of sherry before dinner, one or more highballs later. Within a week he was drinking his whisky straight at the rate of a quart every night. To remonstrate was useless, as he had no delusions in respect to the result.

"Like our ancient friend Euripides," he explained, "I know full well the evils I invite, but my inclination gets the better of my judgment."

In some respects Dr. Moffett was then at his best, loquacious, informative, tolerant even of the intolerance that had estranged him from his profession. But there was a wistfulness in his manner when he talked of Boston and New York which neither time nor self-sufficiency could compensate.

"When they forced me to abandon surgery," he remarked one night, "they served both me and society better than they intended. Half the operations I performed, half the operations any of us performed, were unnecessary or ineffective except to prolong lives already doomed.

"My work now is not destructive, but reconstructive," he continued. "Voltaire said that to preserve a man alive in the midst of so many chances and hostilities is as great a miracle as to create him. Every doctor does that. But thanks to the purblind ethics of my former colleagues, I render a hundredfold greater service. I cure the secret blight that rots a man's body, corrodes his soul and taints unborn generations."

He filled his glass and drained it at a single gulp, then settled

THE TIME OF MY LIFE

back on the sofa, his self-sufficiency on the wane. "But to wend? Money, yes. Fame? All is ephemeral, fame and the fam alike. Honour, rooted in dishonour. Esteem for what I give, for what I am. I have everything, yet possess nothing; noth but this precious elixir of forgetfulness.

"*Dissipat evius curas adeace.* Yes, my lad, old Horace had right idea; we can always depend on Bacchus to scatter cares, to banish regrets, confirm hopes, urge us to greater effort and lift the burden from our anxious minds."

Again he filled his glass. "With the Immortal Bard I drown all unkindness, all men who live on envy and malice, strong jealousy that judgment cannot cure, slander whose sting is sharper than a sword's point.

"Ah, my discreet and faithful friend, be well advised and proceed by what you see: a man crowned with adversity holding a candle to his shame; a chronic drunk and rake gifted with skill, abstract knowledge and mysteries, but eating the bitter bread of banishment."

Until the cumulative effects of increasing amounts of liquor depressed his sensibilities it seemed to do no more than remove inhibitions which slowed the currents in his mind. It was as if all he had ever read and heard had been lastingly recorded, needing only the reaction of alcohol on brain cells to be fresher for reproduction. Long passages from scores of ancient and modern classics were recited with the ease and fluency of great familiarity; innumerable quotations apropos of all human emotions, sentiments and convictions pointed the wisdom distilled from his observations and experience.

Meanwhile he attended his office regularly and doubtless sparkled more brilliantly in the eyes of his patients. But there would come a night when Henry, after driving down for his horse, returned with an empty carriage. Dr. Moffett had disappeared.

"Now, whar yo spose that doctah man is at?" Belle demanded, certain of the answer, yet hoping for a miracle.

"Of course," I suggested, "he may be having his dinner downtown."

"No, suh! He ain't neveh et out when he kit eat in. Ah reckon that misery's got a-holt of him. Hurry yo'r suppah, boy, an' fetch him home."

But it was not often that simple; the search sometimes lasted several days. He was a liberal spender, and there were a num-

of reputedly high-class resorts where he was a welcome guest. If I found him sufficiently stupefied I called a cab, and if he was still buying wine in the midst of lady-entertainers he himself was entertaining, it was necessary to wait until he passed out.

At the beginning of a cycle, while Dr. Moffett was still in the one-or-two-drinks-after-dinner stage, the sound of my droning voice reading aloud tended to calm his disordered nerves. One night while thus engaged he interrupted me.

"You've been here about six months," he said, "serving me as librarian, personal attendant, clerk, companion, nurse, and on occasion private detective and special bodyguard. And none of the qualities which make you useful in those capacities are foreign to my own calling. As a matter of fact the practice of medicine is the very acme of personal service, of a highly specialized and often of a far more intimate nature. Why don't you study medicine?"

"But how can I? I've gone to school only four years."

"So much the better. Your mind's not stuffed with small and unimportant items you'll probably never use. It's been ploughed with a little schooling, fertilized with experience and self-instruction, and is now ready for the planting. With intelligent cultivation it should yield a good harvest.

"Now, Barnes," he went on, still pursuing what I understood to be a sudden fancy, "is a good medical school, and an influential man over there happens to be under some obligation to me. As he has something to do with admitting new students, I'm sure it can be arranged, if you are interested."

If I was sure of anything it was that I had no interest in the prospect of spending my life among sick people. Never having been sick enough to consult a doctor, I regarded them with vague feelings of wonder, slightly coloured with mistrust. Like the police, their presence usually meant trouble for someone. The only curative measure I knew was Aunt Mandy's treatment of burns, and the only personal experience with medicine I recalled was Grandma's routine spring dispensation of sulphur and molasses followed by sassafras tea.

"This is not an impulse of the moment," he continued. "I've had it in mind since Christmas. If you can convince yourself, and me, that you are ready to settle down to an honourable profession I'll advance you the money. You can repay me later."

That his offer seemed incredible must have been apparent, but his brooding, troubled eyes revealed his sincerity as he hastened to explain.

"Now, don't think I'm a philanthropist; my motives are entirely selfish. I've made a mess of my life and opportunities and I'd like to rehabilitate myself to some extent, in my own estimation at least. I'd like to have a part in advancing the medical career of someone more submissive to authority than I was, someone who will maintain the highest standards of professional ethics.

"In medicine, more even than in religion or law, it's the born dissenter and iconoclast who gets into trouble trying to break down old customs and traditions. When Hippocrates, the father of medicine, first taught his art it was with the proviso that it be practised as he prescribed. This was more than two thousand years ago, but the rules are still in force. I disregarded one of them when I disagreed with older, more experienced men, and you see the result. Being in the right was immaterial; it was not what I did, but the way it was done that mattered."

I should not attempt to reach a decision tonight, he said. Before making up my mind I should go over to the medical school and tell them I was thinking of entering as a student. I could then attend a few lectures, get acquainted, gain some idea of what would be required of me. He advised me not to say anything, for the present, about my past, and to tell no one I was working for him; it might give rise to fears I was already contaminated with irregularity. Later, if necessary, he would bring a little pressure to bear on the man he had mentioned, which he was sure would forestall any unpleasantness.

"And by the way," he added, "sooner or later you'll probably hear something about quacks and charlatans. It's astonishing how often those words are misused; if you look them up you'll find they mean ignorant pretenders to knowledge or skill. Now, whatever else I may be, I'm not that. No one in St. Louis is better qualified to practise medicine than I, or gives the public more highly skilled service. My methods may be unethical, but I cure my patients, and I'm not a quack."

My first thought was of immediate acceptance; not that I cared anything about medicine or how it was practised, but in gratitude. No one heretofore had seemed to think I had any promising qualifications; no one but Grandma had shown any interest in

my future. And positively no one had ever before offered to lend me any money.

But opposed to this impulse was the fact that my plans for the summer were pretty well settled. I had saved nearly a hundred dollars and was determined to learn something about my relatives in Cuba. A letter from Uncle Tom stated that Grandma had been sick all winter and wanted to see me. It was my intention to stop a few days at the farm, then go on to New York and catch a steamer to Havana. And I felt certain that by tomorrow this sudden notion to advance money for a medical education would be forgotten.

By next morning the subject was still in his mind. "Take your time about this, my lad," he advised me, "and while you are thinking it over you might begin on that volume I mentioned last night. Every medical student ought to read Hippocrates at least once—not for information about practising medicine, but for instruction in moral and ethical conduct. He tells you what was expected of a doctor in his days and what should be expected now. If you decide to accept my offer you must agree to follow his precepts. I didn't, and you see what happened to me."

While Dr. Moffett was progressing day by day, as was his habit, from approximate sobriety to complete alcoholic saturation, I was growing more deeply mired in a bog of uncertainty. Depending on his changing moods, he quoted endlessly to glorify the practice of medicine, or quite as convincingly to condemn its practitioners, giving me, he affirmed, the considered opinions of the world's greatest minds and leaving me each night more in doubt as to my own.

He found no fault with my plan, but deplored what he called my precipitancy. "There's no cause for haste in discharging your obligation to those people up in Iowa," he assured me. "I assume they are in no immediate need of your assistance, and if they were there's not much you can do about it now; to return in a box-car with a hundred dollars after tramping about the country for years isn't enough."

"The distinctions you make between hobo and tramp are not generally accepted," he went on deliberately, almost sternly, "but it is generally known that the actual differences are only in degree. Time, familiar association, similar interests and the natural tendency to retrogress, wear them all down to a common

level. This is not to say it's very important whether or not you are now what the world calls a tramp; at your age it's not what one is, or was, that matters so much as what he is likely to become. No one is especially interested in a young man's past except in its bearing on his probable future. Now, what exactly are your prospects to date?

"You have a very laudable desire to orient yourself with respect to your relatives in Cuba, but I'm sure you understand why it should be curbed until you can make a better showing. Naturally they will be curious as to the sort of person you are, and no detail in your past, no departure from their conventions, will be too small to escape their attention. We know that favourable or unfavourable impressions are often formed in a moment and are based more often on what appears on the surface than on what lies underneath. And we revise our opinions only when convinced that appearances are deceptive or when accomplishments come somewhere near balancing opportunities."

No one could have bored into my sensibilities more courteously yet effectively than he, as he warmed me with new enthusiasm by drawing attention to some good points I should cultivate, and enlarging on what I could do for myself if I tried. But my self-esteem was properly deflated when he called attention to other qualities not so good which I must weed out if I hoped to get anywhere. As a final shot he said it had been sheer luck, not intelligence nor even good judgment, that had guided me thus far, and that the only sure thing about luck is its changes.

When he had torn my egotism into shreds, leaving me in a state of utter humility, he attempted to bind up my lacerations with restoratives. Because I was alone in the world he had spoken frankly, as a father might admonish a son. And he still thought I would make a good doctor; therefore was willing to lend me the money.

At Barnes Medical College the dean sat at his desk, his sharp little eyes focused on me over the rims of his glasses. He nodded encouragingly when I stated that I had begun the study of law, and disliked it, and waved aside as unimportant my confession of deficiencies in certain subjects required as preliminary to studying medicine. That could be easily arranged, he assured me. I could take up those subjects later at my convenience, perhaps during vacation. He then found the registration book, handed me

a pen, indicated spaces for my name, address, age, previous occupation. Meanwhile he was making out a receipt for ten dollars, the matriculation fee. Smiling genially, he pocketed the money and said I was now a regularly enrolled medical student in the best school west of Chicago, and as such was entitled to all the rights, benefits, and privileges thereunto appertaining. In return I should conduct myself in a manner becoming to membership in a very old and highly honoured profession.

He beamed even more genially upon being told I was prepared to pay my tuition fees in advance, amounting, as I recall it, to about five hundred dollars. There was no great hurry about that, he said. I had shown my sincerity of purpose by matriculating. The fees could be paid later, tomorrow, or next week. But I should begin attending lectures today. In the circumstances there would be no extra charges for the remaining two months of the current year, and by beginning now I would have an advantage over other members of my class; by working industriously I might even become class leader.

Dr. Moffett in coaching me had said nothing about a preceptor; therefore I was unprepared for that formality. But the dean waved it aside also. He would act in that capacity himself. To the best of his meagre ability he would be glad to serve a worthy young man as guide, philosopher and friend.

"And now allow me to offer you my hearty congratulations." He arose and grasped my hand warmly. "No mistake was made in coming to Barnes for your medical education. You'll find every member of the faculty not only a teacher of rare ability and understanding, but a personal friend as well: always willing to help solve your problems, adjust your difficulties and straighten out your misunderstandings. And we are equally proud of our student body: eager representatives of our most outstanding families preparing themselves in the best manner known to science for a noble calling, that of saving human life and relieving suffering. So until I see you again tomorrow morning, Mister . . . er . . ."

He glanced at the register, then adjusted his glasses to examine it more closely. Scowling and plucking at his grizzled vandyke, he turned to me. "Is this where you live? With Moffett? Of course . . . I was wondering where I had seen you."

I stood uncertainly, my mind for the moment a complete blank, while he stepped back to measure me with a long com-

prehensive stare. When he spoke his suave voice had grown stern with righteous indignation, his manner icy.

"I suppose you know that man is the most shameless quack in the city? A notorious drunkard, renegade and impostor who's been kicked out of all the medical societies and would be in jail if he had his just deserts? What have you in common with a vulture who preys on the depraved victims of vice and ignorance which no reputable medical man would touch with gloves, who himself doubtless reeks with the vile infections he pretends to cure?"

His colour mounted with his rage as he strode about the room, waving his arms and gesturing in a mighty effort to ease his mind. If he was putting on a show for my benefit, as I concluded later when I learned more about doctors, he gave a first-class performance.

After reducing his erring colleague to a smudge on the lustrous surface of his profession, he turned to me. "Young man, I shall have to take this matter before the faculty. They may permit you to appear and explain, if you can, what seems to be a very questionable association, but I must warn you in advance that our duty to the entire student body outweighs any sentimental feelings we may have for the individual. Whatever the cost, the fair name of this medical school must be protected against the slightest taint of quackery."

He closed the register with an angry snap and marched stiffly to the door, his face the colour of a plum. "I bid you good afternoon, sir," he grudged, as I stepped outside.

I was so mad myself that I was in the street before thinking of what I should have said in reply, not the least important item being to demand the return of my ten dollars. And I was half-way down town before discovering that I was going in the wrong direction. I could still see that waspish little dean's swollen veins and quivering nostrils as he practically threw me out, all because I was working for a man he hated.

This must be something more than pure hate, I decided. Perhaps it was what Dr. Moffett had in mind when he talked of the bitter intolerance of rivalry when compounded of conceit, jealousy, anger, and fear. The only hatred I knew was personal and vengeful, caused by real or fancied wrongs calling for some kind of direct action. But this was something different, something deeper and more spiteful as it boiled impotently over the hot

embers of its own fuel. The dean had suffered an emotional explosion that must have been hurtful to himself while the object of his attack was enjoying his customary tranquillity.

Having been persuaded against my will to undertake the study of medicine, the outcome of my attempt was disappointing, but not discouraging. It ended nearly a month of conflicting doubts and desires, and revived my former intention to leave St. Louis, modified by a better understanding of vagrancy and by great dissatisfaction with my present way of life. The future was still on the lap of the gods, but one thing was sure: I was not going to become a tramp.

The dean's blistering remarks had thrown additional light on the character of Dr. Moffett, which I had begun to suspect would not stand up without the support of his fascinating personality. I recalled that each morning of late I had been dimly conscious of a presence in the house after he had gone: some vague and oppressive emanation which lingered through the day and scattered or was masked on his return. I could sense it more distinctly that evening; when I entered the library, the walls, rugs, chairs, books, every piece of furnishing seemed to be saturated with the same slightly sickening essence suggestive of Dr. Moffett. I tried to read, but my thoughts were elsewhere. I went up to my room and without fixed purpose began sorting my few possessions. Dreading explanations, I rehearsed mentally what I should say to him, if and when I decided to leave.

Presently old Henry drove in alone; the doctor had not been in the office since noon. Downstairs I could hear Belle grumbling about that misery in his head, and I knew what was expected of me. There would be round after round of clubs, saloons and dives, then hours of unwanted and often embarrassed waiting until he passed out.

Why not get out tonight? Now? He owed me about twenty dollars in wages, and I had ten dollars invested in a useless matriculation fee. But I had more than a hundred in cash, which was more than enough for my needs. And that ten dollars was not a total loss, I reflected. I could tell the folks truthfully that I was a regularly enrolled medical student, entitled to a lot of rights, benefits and privileges. . . .

I found a canvas handbag and packed it with extra clothing, carried it down to the front door. Belle always advanced me five dollars expense money when I started out looking for the doctor.

That night I talked her out of ten, promising not to come back without him. Busying myself in the library until no one was about, I slipped outside, caught a street car down town. For the first time in my life I bought a railroad ticket with money I had earned; I was going back to Iowa and I was not riding in a box-car.

FIVE years had brought few changes to the village. At the depot the same old rickety Madison House bus with the broken step was waiting for the 5.45 express. Jerry Huck, the driver, was standing where he had always stood at train time, wearing the same black straw hat and apparently the same blue shirt and striped overalls, watching doggedly for the occasional travelling man or visitor who might patronize the hotel.

The same ticket agent, baggage master, telegrapher and porter in the person of Mister Jarvis, his official black cap with the gold braid at the usual rakish angle, hurried forward with the mail, then sauntered back to chat a moment with the conductor. Jarvis had lost his left hand while working for the railroad and for years had worn a device over the stump, into which he screwed various implements he had learned to use with astonishing facility. On Sundays he wore a home-made wooden hand covered with a yellow glove. I recognized a number of men loafing on the platform, but the boys and girls were strangers. It was several minutes before I realized that a new crop, identical in all respects but features, had matured into adolescence. Miraculously to me, the youngsters I had known and still pictured in my mind had grown up.

At the crest of the first hill I was in sight of Grandfather's lush fields. There was the deep forest bordering the river, the yellowish-green maple trees, the old red barn and a corner of the house brightly tinted by the setting sun. Nothing had changed, yet the aspect of everything was different. It was the same view, through the same eyes, but something within me had given new significance to these friendly and peaceful surroundings as contrasted with the cold and often hostile indifference I had met elsewhere. Lugging my heavy handbag, I trotted down the hill, then slowed my pace over the next rise and on to the house.

The family was at supper when I walked in, eager to surprise them, confident of my reception. Grandfather glanced up, then half-smilingly started to arise, but changed his mind to settle back with a muttered, "Well, I'll be damned! So you've come back."

I could feel the disapprobation creeping into his friendly eyes as he watched me at the table, while Grandma, ever more demonstrative than he, made up for his manifest coolness. Later, as Aunt Annie cleared away the dishes, my feelings gave way to the occasion; with impulsive and extravagant pride I laid my hundred dollars in Grandma's lap as a present.

Grandfather's reaction to this peace offering was immediate and startling. "Don't you take it!" he barked, heaving himself from the table and standing over her threateningly. "Look at his fancy clothes, feel them hands, as soft as any woman's! That boy ain't done a day's work this summer, an' he's not smart enough to get all that money without workin' or stealin'." He stumped angrily to the door, then turned to Grandma with a hand on the latch: "Now, mind what I'm tellin' you, he can stay all night if he wants to, but don't you take any of that money!"

Not until I had gone over the past four years month by month, state by state and job by job, was he convinced that I had worked for my apparent riches and fine clothes; and not until he told me he and Grandma were married ten years before they had saved a hundred dollars in cash did I understand how reasonable was his suspicion. He said he'd never heard of a boy coming home with a pocket full of money and then giving it away unless he'd stolen it.

I still wonder what Grandfather would have thought had I appeared in the first complete outfit of clothing I bought for myself. Always having had a strong predilection for lively colours, my new job as librarian in a famous specialist's home called for something extra special in wearing apparel; therefore I bought a light blue suit with white stripes, a white shirt with broad pink stripes, red tie, light tan shoes, black-and-white socks, and a flat brim straw hat to be worn tipped jauntily over the right eye. Belle declared it was a perfectly grand combination, but when Dr. Moffett came in he said I was dressed up like the leader in a pimps' parade. That night and on several occasions thereafter he gave me some badly needed and very pointed advice on my personal appearance.

As I had never been more than superficially domesticated, the thrill of home-coming was short-lived. In spite of the family's best efforts, the farm was insufferably dull. Within a week we had talked ourselves dry of news; there was nothing in the house fit to read; eight o'clock was the bedtime hour. Long, lonesome

nights were followed by longer days with nothing interesting to do. Why, I wondered, was my memory so short? Why did my recollections always colour the distant scenery so beautifully? On several occasions I had looked forward eagerly to New York's lower east side, but when there soon grew dissatisfied; I had been homesick for the farm, and now in less than a week I was more homesick for St. Louis. The delicious home-cooking I had savoured in my mind on many an occasion was in fact soggy, insipid, served in huge gobs to be bolted in a medley of clattering knives, spoons, grunts, gurgles and smacks. As compared with Belle's inspired culinary creations, Susie's attentive service and Dr. Moffett's fascinating chatter, mealtime was now a crude and noisy contest in speed and capacity; in less than nine months the scions of critical appraisal and ultra-refined sensibilities that had been grafted into the hobo stem had produced a very superior person.

Grandfather did not take kindly to the change. He hoped I had come back to settle down on the farm, holding that my high-flown notions and finicky tastes could be sweated out of my system by chopping wood and hoeing the garden. When a fair trial resulted in nothing more purifying than blisters on my hands and black lines under my finger nails, he said they were signs of progress, not grounds for sympathy. But understanding, if not sympathy, came from Grandma, who was enormously proud of my embryonic medical career. She looked upon the receipt for my matriculation fee as practically equivalent to a diploma, and never failed to exhibit it when neighbourhood girls found excuses to call and hang around, affectedly prim and polite, yet obviously quite receptive to advances I was in no mood to make. I had but one absorbing interest, one consuming desire, which was to get back into civilization without hurting the family's feelings.

My opportunity came early in June, when the weekly newspaper gave an account of a tornado in St. Louis. More than a hundred lives had been lost, several hundred were injured, a large part of the city was destroyed. I must leave at once. Grandfather demurred, then consented reluctantly; Grandma wanted to return the hundred dollars, but compromised by lending me my fare. Thoroughly repentant and determined to restore myself in Dr. Moffett's good graces, and if possible enter medical school in September, I left the farm for what was to be the last time.

The tornado had indeed demolished St. Louis' business district, cutting a swathe nearly a mile wide from the river almost to Forrest Park. When I arrived they were still finding victims buried in the debris. Dr. Moffett's office was completely wrecked, his house on Washington Avenue damaged beyond repair. A policeman said he understood the doctor was in a sanatorium, location unknown; Belle and Susie had disappeared. Most of the furniture had also disappeared, but books were scattered everywhere. I found a volume of Hippocrates that he had urged me to read, which I kept for thirty years and almost committed to memory. No one knew what had become of the dogs, horses, Belle, Susie, or old Henry; seemingly no one knew or was interested in anything beyond his own personal loss. Despondent and sick at heart, I wandered about the house and garden, sat on the curb, talked to a woman next door who was still slightly hysterical: her husband had been severely injured while in a street-car that had been upset by the storm and blown halfway through a store. That night for the first time in my life I got very drunk.

Several days later I found a job down town clearing away the debris, where my refined sensibilities were thinned out in spots and became encrusted with a tougher, more practical covering. I slept in a cheap river-front hotel, gulped my meals in a cheap river-front hash-house, drank my beer in a cheap river-front saloon, and was tough enough to hold my own in the toughest company. A few inquiries had failed to locate Dr. Moffett; St. Louis without him meant nothing to me. One night after a free-for-all fight which ended in a riot call, I slipped back to my room, stuffed some personal effects, including my book, into a small bag, caught an east-bound freight train.

WITH a slowly forming conviction that continued tramping about the country was neither safe nor satisfying, I had gone from St. Louis to New York, then on to Boston, where I found a job, a cheap boarding-house, pinched my pennies through the week to live on Sundays in a good hotel in a style I hoped to enjoy when I got rich. Ideas planted in my mind by Dr. Moffett were beginning to take root.

This rather unusual procedure eventually gave rise to some small amount of comment; privation alternating with opulence over a period of months was something to be explained, and my vanity permitted no explanation. Quite the contrary. Just for the hell of it I probably grew more mysterious. On several occasions I discovered someone looking at me suspiciously; one lad whom I knew asked me outright if I was a spy. Something in a newspaper gave rise to the belief several Spanish spies were active around Boston, seeking information about contraband being shipped to Cuba. Finally, I found myself without either job or boarding-house one Monday morning in June, when I had exactly one dollar to my name. The old urge to travel began gnawing at me; I tried to enlist in the navy, but was turned down on account of defective vision in one eye. For want of something better, I joined a group of Harvard University students working their way to Liverpool on a cattle ship.

This was a new and prophetic experience. In payment for feeding and grooming the cargo, consisting of several hundred seasick but untamed Texas steers, and as compensation for having to eat, sleep and work below decks among them, at the end of the voyage we were given third-class return tickets and a pound sterling in cash. This was considered ample in view of the intent, which was, in theory, to afford the cultural advantages of foreign travel at little or no cost.

I was not permitted to observe the progress of this educational effort beyond the first night ashore. But the last I saw of the students in the early morning hours, they were still hilariously investigating English pulchritude in Liverpool pubs, where one

of them had expertly won my return ticket in a dice game. He had then handsomely sold it for twenty shillings and bought drinks for all hands until we were eventually thrown out. Next day I found a chance to work my passage back to New York on a freighter, with greatly increased respect for university training and favourably disposed towards further adventures at sea.

One afternoon in August I was out on the East River docks, where the refreshing tang of salt water on a hot day made me yearn for a regular sea-going job. The *Escobar*, a once white, converted yacht of five or six hundred tons, was straining at her lines as though eager to be free. Several men were busy on deck, directed by an officer who presently came ashore. He eyed me sharply as he passed, seemingly about to speak, but continued on into a warehouse. One of the men leaned over the ship's rail to ask if I had an extra cigarette.

He said they were leaving that night at high tide with a cargo of machinery for Boca Del Toro, Central America. They would return in a month with a load of bananas. The crew was still short a man, and he thought I might land a job if I'd ever been at sea. The mate had just gone ashore, but the skipper was in the wheel-house; I could go up and talk to him.

Captain Brun was a heavy-set, grim-faced Norwegian with a stubby red beard and a very positive air. He fired a round of questions at me when he learned I was a Cuban, inquiring closely into what I had been doing, and where, for the past few years. As he did not seem to be a man one could lie to with impunity, I admitted my limited experience at sea, but assured him I had learned to stand watch and box a compass. I was also a good painter. He smiled sparingly at this as he told me to see the mate, who gave me a job.

Shortly after midnight a small tug drew up alongside the *Escobar*, twenty-five men scrambled aboard, were hurried below decks. A few minutes later we cast off and backed away from the dock. As I was off duty, I turned in, but the softly throbbing engines and a realization that one of my dreams was coming true kept me awake. Three men snoring in their bunks added to my wakefulness. When Scotty, the man who had cadged a cigarette, came down I asked him about our last-minute passengers, but he offered no explanation. He advised me to forget it, saying that the first law of the sea is to obey orders and

ask no questions; if anything came up concerning me I would learn about it in good time.

Late next afternoon the *Escobar's* engines were slowed to half speed, then stopped. The misty shoreline of New Jersey rested lightly on the western horizon behind black shadows reaching out to overtake us. A small fishing boat wallowing in the trough of the sea raised a white flag as we approached; in a moment we had lowered a ladder, taken three men dressed as fishermen aboard, with several pieces of luggage. The captain rang full speed ahead. Darkness and more mystery settled over the ship.

Next day the secret began leaking. I heard a rumour that our latest passengers were exiled officers in the Cuban army; that the men taken aboard in New York before we sailed were also Cubans, en route to join the rebel forces in revolt against Spain. This was serious business. We had no licence to carry passengers, and, furthermore, we were aiding a revolution. If caught, the ship would be tied up and all of us might land in jail.

Here indeed was adventure of a kind I had often dreamed but never hoped to realize. I was to have some part, however small, in a cause I had followed with deepest concern. Almost bursting with curiosity, I asked Scotty for more particulars.

He eyed me coldly while tucking some snuff inside his lower lip. "Who'n hell's been feedin' you all that crap?" he demanded.

"Oh, one of the firemen."

"Well, he'd better keep his mouth shut an' so'd you. Or mebby you'd better ask the skipper. He'll tell you."

The third night out of New York we slipped quietly into a dark, narrow lagoon below Savannah, felt our way slowly to a deserted wharf, picked up seven flat-bottomed dories, then stood straight out to sea.

Not until we had rounded the Bahamas with nothing in sight but a few naked rocks and sandy keys was the secret fully disclosed. As everyone, apparently, but I had known all along, in addition to the machinery for Boca Del Toro, there were tons of arms, ammunition, dynamite and medical supplies in the *Escobar's* hold for the Cuban revolutionists. This had been taken aboard at Bridgeport a few days before we sailed. The dories were to be used in landing them under direction of General Nunez, one of our mysterious passengers.

Nunez, chief purchasing and distributing agent for the revolutionists, was an important personage, and Spain had offered a

big reward for his arrest. He lived in constant dread of treachery, or of some slip in his perfectly planned and timed operations carried out under the noses of our own and Spain's secret agents. He had therefore been on the verge of a nervous collapse. But now that we were safely in British waters with nothing to fear and no one to outwit but Spanish gunboats, he calmed down. Perched atop the wheel-house, he had spotted danger in islands and disaster in harmless tramp steamers, but he now spent his time on deck under an awning, smoking innumerable cigarettes and sipping rum with his subordinates, or talking to Captain Brun.

Like many leaders in the Cuban rebellion, General Nunez showed some negro blood, while one of his companions, although much darker, had no negroid features. Having heard no Spanish for twelve years, I had great difficulty in following their rapid-fire patois, and they in turn were amused at my very correct pronunciation but halting search for words until I mentioned Grandfather Solano. Their amusement then flared into consternation. I must be a spy, they said. All the Solanos were hated Spanish tyrants. Manuel Solano y Moreno had fought the Cubans mercilessly all through the last insurrection; he could be my grandfather. Fernando Solano y Salcedo had been a cruel Governor-General of Cuba. That would be my great-grandfather. This was news to me, but the General seemed to know what he was talking about; no doubt a great deal to be remembered had been seared into the revolutionists' minds. It was not until I had gone over all the circumstances I could recall of my childhood that he calmed down, and I doubt if he ever quite trusted my loyalty.

The day after we passed through Crooked Island Passage we anchored in the lee of a small uninhabited key, where the grates were cleared, the engines checked, final preparations made for landing. Setting a course to Baracoa Light, we timed our speed to reach it the following night.

Fortunately the following night was very dark. Running without lights, we were still three or four miles off Baracoa when we sighted a brightly lighted vessel running down the coast close inshore, evidently heading for Baracoa Bay. General Nunez was sure it was the Spanish cruiser *Viscaya*. This was a moment I never forgot. Except for a dim, carefully shaded light over the compass, the *Escobar* was completely dark; no one was allowed to smoke, and I doubt if anyone could have been hired to light a

match or speak an unnecessary word. We knew what to expect if the *Viscaya* caught us: months or years in Cabanas Fortress, possibly a firing squad before its stone wall.

Our engines idling along at less than half speed, we headed offshore, watching the *Viscaya* pass the light and disappear in the bay; we then held a course from there to a little cove where we were to land. One of Nunez's companions and two Cuban patriots were set ashore on a point commanding the cove's entrance, prepared to signal at the first sign of danger. Using barely enough power to keep steerage-way, with a man on the ship's bow taking soundings, we crept slowly to an anchorage less than a half-mile from the beach.

Hatches were broken open, dories lowered, everyone began working madly to unload. But several hundred boxes of dynamite and percussion caps were handled gingerly, with a hope they would not blow up until they had been placed on many bridges. Two Hotchkiss guns, five hundred shells, two thousand rifles wrapped in burlap in bundles of five, were handed down to the dories. Hundreds of machetes in crates and two hundred and fifty thousand rounds of rifle ammunition were relayed to the waiting men.

Meanwhile, watchers on the beach had dashed away to notify General Garcia's army, or stragglers from it, of our arrival. Within a few minutes a crowd of ragged, wild-eyed soldiers were helping us unload, manning the dories, carrying precious implements of war into the jungle. By daylight we had landed more than a hundred tons of supplies for the rebel army.

General Nunez, now in full uniform, went ashore on the last boat, after embracing everyone on deck from captain to cook and promising to see us soon in New York. He would consult General Garcia, learn his most urgent needs, manage somehow to procure and deliver them. The *Escobar* steamed proudly out of the cove and brazenly past Baracoa Bay, where the *Viscaya* lay at anchor. The mate in passing thumbed his nose and gave her the equivalent of a Bronx cheer. Then, rounding Cape Maysi, the eastern extremity of Cuba, we rambled down through Windward Passage and Jamaica Channel into the Caribbean Sea. We were on our way to Boca Del Toro with a cargo of machinery.

Boca, as it was familiarly known, was probably the hottest spot on the entire Mosquito Coast, the favourite rendezvous, not to

say sanctuary, for a shady crew of adventurers, small-time pirates deserters, beachcombers and political exiles. Its chief exports were bananas, coco-nuts and turtle shells, but its chief industries were conspiracies, revolutions and smuggling, out of the proceeds of which some two or three thousand residents, blended from white to black through many strains of red and yellow, lived in tropical indolence. As the most serious business ventures were merely planned in Boca, to be executed elsewhere, existence in the meagre present on a diet of rice, fish, bananas and an occasional chicken was made endurable by the prospect of a more abundant future if and when another revolution was pulled off. Robberies and petty thieving were rare, but sudden death was frequent and doubtless could have been multiplied with considerable advantage to the entire community.

It was said that four promising revolutions to be carried out in neighbouring states were then in the making; that no less than fourteen past and future Central American presidents were living precariously in Boca. Scotty, who knew whereof he spoke, advised taking no chances; one should always address a large coloured man who wore shoes or had gold in his teeth as General.

The moment we tied up at the wharf to unload our machinery, which turned out to be rails, bolts, spikes and small flatcars for a projected tramway, two Colombian customs officers were stationed aboard the *Escobar* to prevent smuggling; heavy duties on imported tobacco gave sailors a chance to earn a little extra spending money. Several of our men had filled their dunnage-bags with snuff and Bull Durham before leaving New York, and one of them got in touch with a Chinese storekeeper who offered a good price. Only the problem of delivery remained, which in the past had been simple.

But, incredibly, these customs officers were beyond bribery. It was not that they were narrow-minded in their honesty; the best offer we could afford to make was too small, and only complicated matters by sharpening the official vigilance. Something different from the usual practice of walking off the ship with one's shirt stuffed with dutiable merchandise was necessary.

After unloading our cargo we had anchored in the bay, while Captain Brun scouted the lagoons for a plantation having bananas to sell at bargain prices. He returned about dark and gave orders to move out early next morning. The tobacco had to be taken ashore that night,

There was a consultation in the fore-castle. Three empty five-gallon kerosene tins were filled with our illicit stock in trade, soldered watertight, tied together and shoved through a cinder-port. Wearing a life-preserver and with a knife in his belt to ward off sharks, one of the men lowered himself overboard and swam with the float beyond range of the *Escobar's* lights, while four of us with no suspicious bulges on our persons marched past the customs officers and rowed around the ship to pick up our cargo and tow it ashore.

MY first filibustering expedition yielded me a month's wages and a bonus of one hundred dollars. This was a lot of money, more than I had thought it possible to earn in so short a time and in such a worthy cause, not to mention the full measure of excitement thrown in as a sort of super-bonus.

On our return to New York we had stopped at Key West to take coal, tying up behind a disreputable-looking old sea-going tug called the *Three Friends*, also taking coal. With an air of bored weariness, her mate said she had been out around Dry Tortugas looking for a wreck, that she was then on her way back to Jacksonville. Our mate observed complacently that we were importing bananas.

Everyone had heard of the *Three Friends*. She was the most famous, or perhaps in some quarters notorious, filibuster then supplying arms to the Cuban revolutionists. With the *Dauntless* and the *Laurada*, each of which was directed and often personally operated by Captain O'Brien, known as "Dynamite Johnny," they had been very largely instrumental in keeping the Cubans supplied with war materials and in good heart while public opinion in the United States was crystallizing into intervention and war with Spain. Other vessels such as the *Escobar* were available for charter when these better-known and more closely watched ships could not be used, but none of them were rated as professional filibusters.

It was exciting work. Thousands of Cubans throughout the country were giving a part of their meagre earnings each week to the revolutionists' war chest, which was further enriched by small and often by very large contributions from wealthy sympathizers. With this steady flow of money, agents in New York maintained their headquarters and bought supplies to be shipped to the Cuban army. All of this, of course, in scandalous violation of our official neutrality and in spite of Spain's angry protests.

Every step, from the purchase of war materials on down through each carefully planned detail of delivery, was dangerous. Dozens of Spanish secret agents and scores of private detectives kept every

known Cuban leader under surveillance. All of them had to be outwitted. Other scores of amateur spies were willing to sell each scrap of authentic or imaginary information about filibustering which happened to come their way; therefore had to be avoided. It was inevitable that each transaction might involve at least one weakling who could be bluffed, or an informer who could be bribed into talking. And, finally, our own Government officials must be protected. Many of them were conveniently near-sighted, but there must be no evidence, nor even the slightest suspicion, of collusion. At no time was there any difficulty in buying materials of war, but to transport and deliver them was ticklish business, where resourcefulness and skill were as indispensable as bravery.

"Dynamite Johnny" O'Brien, Captain of the *Three Friends*, was a highly skilled and resourceful navigator with a fertile mind, a fiery disposition and exceptional courage. More important still, his honesty was unquestioned and his honour unimpaired by his illegal calling. Short and stocky, with bristling white hair, moustache and goatee, his cold blue eyes and thin lips were not designed for smiling. But he laughed easily and often in short heaving bellows which were practically indistinguishable in sound from the orders he bawled. None of his crew, however, was mistaken more than once in perceiving that there was a very distinct difference between laughter and command.

While lying at Key West I ventured, with Captain Brun's permission, to ask him for a job.

He squinted at me sharply while filling and lighting his pipe. "How long you been on the *Escobar*?" he asked.

"One trip, sir. New York to Boca and return. That's all I signed up for, and I'll be free when we get back."

"Stop anywhere on the way down, did-ja?"

"No, sir."

"What's that?"

"No, sir."

A storm seemed to be gathering in the wrinkles around his eyes and mouth as he jerked his head up to stare at me. "Well, of all the god-damned gall I ever seen!" he roared. "Standin' there askin' fer a job an' lyin' in me face!" Glaring fiercely, he waited a moment, then as I made no reply his manner changed slowly, his voice becoming a soft rumble. "Listen, me lad. You don't need lie to me. We're all in the same game an' I want to know what

Brun brought down, so I'll know meself what they're runnin' short of." He gave me a laborious wink and waited expectantly.

"Yes, sir. I'll ask the captain if there was anything aboard but machinery. Of course, I wouldn't know."

Again he squinted at me, but with a different light in his eyes, a faint grin parting his lips. "Of course not. An' you wouldn't be tryin' to kid an old man like me, would you?" He puffed his pipe a moment, looking me up and down. "This tug'll be layin' up in a few days, but I might find a berth fer a likely lad on something else. If I run across him in New York." He turned and sauntered aft without so much as a glance in my direction, which Scotty told me later was as good as a promise of a job.

Upon reaching New York I went to the Cuban revolutionary headquarters and asked for Captain O'Brien. To my surprise, no one there admitted having ever heard of him. Next morning, and each day thereafter, I returned on the same errand, with the same result, until at length a distinguished-looking little man stepped from a back room to ask what I wanted with Captain O'Brien. To him I told my story. After a few searching questions he allowed me to leave a message to be delivered if and when the captain showed up, and a few days later I was told to inquire on the *Dauntless*, then tied up in Brooklyn. I learned there that the little man at headquarters who had finally given me a break was Tomas Estrada Palma, destined to become Cuba's first President.

The *Dauntless* had been laid up for several weeks following her last trip, having undergone a minor disaster which I regretted having missed. This big ocean-going tug with a full cargo of guns and explosives and a party of thirty or forty Cuban exiles on board en route to join Garcia's army, had blown a boiler somewhere off the coast of Florida. Helpless, she had drifted around three or four days until spotted by a revenue cutter searching for filibusters. The cutter's officers had gone aboard, asked for the captain, who said he was out looking for a wreck reported to be near Nassau. Upon recognizing "Dynamite Johnny" O'Brien, the lieutenant in command had grown sternly efficient. He must do his duty, he declared brusquely; the ship must be searched for contraband. This business of smuggling arms to the Cuban revolutionists must be stopped. He had then proceeded to examine

with utmost care the galley, pilot-house, captain's quarters, fore-castle, every imaginable place except the hold, which was filled to overflowing with exactly what he was supposed to be looking for. Inadvertently he had opened the door to a store-room packed with large cases of cartridges, all plainly marked. Captain O'Brien explained that these were sardines, an explanation which the lieutenant accepted. He admitted gravely that with such a large crew the *Dauntless* must carry a big supply of food.

The cutter had towed the ship into Key West and informed Washington that a careful search had revealed nothing suspicious aboard. Temporary repairs were made, with enough dynamite in the hold to blast half the town off the island, after which the *Dauntless* had limped up the coast and stored her cargo in an abandoned warehouse. She had then gone on to Jacksonville to have new boilers installed.

Steam was up the morning I joined her in Brooklyn, and the mate, a coffee-coloured negro named Floyd, said they were leaving in a few days for Boston. I understood by this that they were probably going in the opposite direction very soon. He also said he had not seen Captain O'Brien since leaving Jacksonville and had no idea where he was, meaning that the captain would be on hand when she sailed. I had learned on the *Escobar* that while there might be veracious filibusters, there were no eternal verities in filibustering.

Evidently the *Dauntless* was still an object of suspicion. A small revenue cutter, also with steam up, was lying in an adjoining slip, and a number of sailors lounged in the warehouse and on the dock, more or less openly checking each article we took aboard. The cutter's commanding officer was taking his official neutrality seriously.

Captain O'Brien came aboard that evening. About midnight we backed quietly out of the slip and headed down the bay at half-speed. In a few minutes the cutter was trailing behind, apparently at almost full speed. We loafed along until morning, losing a little distance from time to time, allowing the cutter to almost catch up, then turning on a little more power and watching the sparks pour from our pursuer's funnel as she stoked her fires. When the sun began peering over the horizon on our port bow the captain rang for full speed ahead. An hour later the cutter was hull down behind us.

Captain O'Brien was in excellent humour; he was back on his

favourite ship, which was performing beautifully. She was doing a good twelve knots without crowding. The weather was fine, the crew dependable. Wherever we were going and whatever we were undertaking, our start was auspicious.

One delight in filibustering was an abundance of leisure. Aside from standing watch, keeping the fires burning and the ship reasonably clean, there was not much to do between loading and unloading. And sometimes we were idle for weeks when the ship was tied up for repairs or to allay suspicion. Cargoes were usually taken aboard with the aid of power winches, or at least hand trucks, but were discharged entirely by hand and at night. Everyone then worked like mad. Stripped to the waist and in total darkness, or in dimmed light shielded by tarpaulins which also cut off all cooling breezes, we could and did land tons of heavy materials with remarkable speed. The callouses on our hands would have convinced even Grandfather that we were earning an honest living.

The third night out from Brooklyn we felt our way into a narrow lagoon and up to a dark warehouse, where two carloads of contraband were waiting. This was quickly taken aboard, and successfully delivered a few days later in Cienfuegos Bay. Continuing eastward and up through Windward Passage, we found a large three-mast schooner anchored in a little bight on Orange Key, laden to the guards with guns, ammunition, dynamite, all sorts of supplies. Our old friend, General Nunez, was in charge of the expedition with fifty Cuban helpers, and the timing had been so accurately worked out that he had arrived only the day before. The dynamite was taken aboard first, and landed without untoward incident less than ten miles east of Havana within plain sight of Morro light. Six nights later we landed the rest of the schooner's cargo and the Cuban recruits on the same beach.

This indeed was adding insult to injury, with a pungent seasoning of contempt. More than a dozen revenue cutters and several larger vessels were patrolling the Florida coast with orders, published in hope of appeasing a frantic Spanish Ambassador in Washington, to run down and if necessary sink the *Dauntless*. The whole Spanish navy was attempting to guard the coast of Cuba. Nevertheless, within two weeks' time we had delivered more than two hundred tons of miscellaneous supplies to the Cuban revolutionists, some of it within sight of Havana and the redoubtable General Weyler's headquarters. Captain O'Brien claimed the

success of these enterprises had more to do with Weyler's recall than all the published accounts of his cruelty. At any rate he was replaced a few weeks later by General Blanco.

Our cargoes delivered, we raced westward with a clean and empty hold, a jubilant captain and a tired but thankful crew. As a special reward a small cask of wine was broken out and everyone invited to help himself, with a warning not to get drunk. In emphatic and memorable words the captain promised to attend personally to the sobering-up of anyone who drank too much.

To avoid traffic we circled out beyond Tortugas, then ran down to Key West from the north to take coal and catch up with the latest news, which, to our surprise, concerned our latest exploit. We had no more than tied up at the wharf when it became clear that someone had been talking. Cheers and congratulations greeted us privately, but officially we rated little above pirates. The *Dauntless*, we learned, was a disgrace to the flag she almost never raised and a menace to international peace and goodwill. Loyal citizens of Havana were outraged; Spain had been betrayed by a friendly nation; the Governor-General of one of her richest possessions had suffered a personal affront and was demanding satisfaction. An example was to be made of the ship and all her crew. This and more to the same effect was the news.

Gruff customs officers swarmed aboard, searched the ship from stem to stern, arrested Captain O'Brien and General Nunez. Everyone was questioned repeatedly and at length, and everyone stood pat on the statement that we had been up around Cape Sable looking for a wreck. The harassed and slightly humiliated officials shook their heads sadly over this threadbare alibi, but it could not be disproved. After several days of inquiries, threats and promises designed to break down our story, a telegram from Washington ordered the prisoners' discharge from custody. They came aboard to talk with the mate; then, bearing self-satisfied and sanctimonious airs, they disappeared. In a day or so another telegram released the ship, which officially closed the incident.

Captain Cartyra, a Cuban, was in command when we cleared for Jacksonville, where we found even more Government agents bent on making amends for the indignity heaped on Governor-General Weyler. The captain was arrested, the ship again thoroughly searched and an iron-jawed guard stationed aboard. But, strangely enough, in a day or so another telegram from Washington released both ship and captain.

We towed a few barges down St. John's River, a few others back to town, all under guard. We wondered what had become of Captain O'Brien, and we hounded the mate for news. When one of the engineers, complaining of dry rot in his timbers, wanted to quit the ship and was advised to hold on a little longer, we knew that something was brewing.

One morning we cleared for Savannah with a small schooner in tow and a customs inspector on deck as a passenger. It was felt in official quarters that the *Dauntless* could not yet be trusted. But Captain Cartyra showed no signs of displeasure. Within an hour he and the officer were on friendly terms; at dinner they shared a bottle of good wine, then played cribbage until Cartyra had lost several dollars. Next day when we were hailed by a revenue cutter and the boarding officer found we were already under guard, we were allowed to proceed.

The day after we reached Savannah our inspector-passenger stamped aboard with a telegram ordering him back to Jacksonville immediately. He wanted to know how soon we could get under way.

Captain Cartyra gazed at him sorrowfully. He would call the engineer. Unfortunately, a leak had appeared in a stern bearing which must be repaired. . . .

The engineer was apologetic. He hoped it would be a matter of only a few days, but if the bearing was cracked she would have to be put in dry dock. They were working on it, he said, and should know tomorrow. . . .

Sounds of hammering in the ship's hold gave evidence of something having gone wrong, and seemed to dispel the inspector's suspicion, if not his vexation. There was apparent concern in the captain's voice as he suggested patience; every effort would be made to hasten the repairs, but of course one could never tell. A leaking ship was an uncertain proposition. He had hoped for a chance to prove himself a better hand at cribbage on their return to Jacksonville. . . .

The inspector was almost jovial when he departed that evening, after an early dinner washed down with the captain's excellent wine and in a carriage which, providentially, was waiting on the docks. As a final gesture of goodwill the captain ordered one of the crew to carry his heavy bag, accompany him to the station, see him safely aboard the train. Upon the man's return we made ready to sail.

We cast off in a dripping fog, inched our way down the river. Guided by the hoarse bellow of a revenue cutter's siren, we made Tybee light and deep water; next morning in clear weather we turned on full speed and fetched up three days later in a bay on Andros Island. The *Silver Heels*, a big two-mast schooner, was anchored in the bay; Captain O'Brien and General Nunez were on board with a large number of Cuban recruits. In the schooner's hold were many tons of supplies for the Cuban army. When these were transferred to the *Dauntless* we set our course for Matanzas.

The coast was clear when we glided silently into Matanzas Bay and over to a little bight where we were to find a detail from the Cuban army in waiting. The lights of the city at the head of the bay were so plainly visible that one of the crew, who lived there, could identify the streets.

The night was very dark. As we crept slowly up to the beach, murmuring voices and an answered signal, the telegraphed letters *si*, made by striking them on a stone, set the stage for action. The first Cuban soldier to come aboard gave us startling news. The battleship *Maine* had been blown up two days before while lying in Havana harbour. Hundreds of sailors had been lost; rioting was under way in the city and spreading throughout the island. War between the United States and Spain was imminent; in fact, there were rumours that it had already been declared.

We had scarcely begun unloading when a small ship pulled out from Matanzas, which by her lights was soon identified as a Spanish gunboat. She veered off to the opposite side of the bay, chugging along at slow speed, evidently on patrol; she passed the bight not more than a mile distant.

When the gunboat had disappeared outside the bay we worked furiously for an hour or so, then discovered that she was returning. Moreover, she was coming back on our side. She would probably swing into the bight; if she came close to the beach we would be trapped. In that event we knew we could expect no quarter; even if war had been declared we were not in uniform, we belonged to no regular military establishment. To be caught red-handed so soon after having practically defied the Spanish Government would have been disastrous.

Captain O'Brien watched her a moment closely, then ordered the anchor line paid out until there was sufficient length to reach the beach, chopped it off, had the free end taken ashore and tied

to a tree. The way was now clear to make a dash for the bay and perhaps escape, but such was not his intention. There were still many tons of supplies to be unloaded.

A light Hotchkiss gun was on deck waiting to be taken ashore, needing only to be mounted on its carriage to be ready for use. This was a simple operation of but a few minutes.

"Break out some of them shells," he growled; then, calling to one of the crew who had formerly been a naval gunner, he went on: "An' you git that gun ready. We're goin' to git out of here, an' if that damned Ginnie tries to stop us we'll start the war right now. An' if you can't hit him I'll ram him an' we'll take to the water. Damme if I don't!"

We swung around and started out of the bight hugging the shore as closely as we dared, our Hotchkiss loaded and trained on the gunboat. She came in and circled the beach, not bothering to swing her searchlight, which was fixed dead ahead, then passed on out of the bight unsuspecting that the most heartily despised and eagerly sought filibuster of them all was slipping from her grasp. The *Dauntless* was painted a dull brown and was completely dark, but the Spanish lookout must have been asleep or blinded by his own glaring lights to have missed us.

One peculiarity of Spanish naval tactics was the general practice of running at night with all lights burning brightly. Not only the usual running lights, but dozens of others. We never knew whether this was a show of arrogant superiority or fear of darkness, but we approved the custom. It was a guarantee against surprise.

Everyone on the *Dauntless* was keyed up to the highest pitch of excitement, yet there was no panic and very little anxiety. But during one long moment while the two ships were passing in opposite directions less than half a mile apart we scarcely dared breathe. Cartyra, having exact local knowledge of Cuban waters, was at the wheel. General Nunez, knowing to a certainty that if captured in such circumstances he would not be granted even the formality of a trial before facing the firing squad, had taken off his uniform and was ready to jump overboard. I, too, was estimating the distance to the beach and wondering if I could swim that far. But Captain O'Brien was magnificently calm. He stood a solid pillar of self-assured strength beside the gunner, his stubby legs separated widely, his feet planted firmly on deck, his white head gleaming softly under the stars.

Standing well offshore, we watched the gunboat round the point and continue up the bay, to be lost finally among the lights of Matanzas. We then returned to our previous anchorage, retrieved our anchor line, finished unloading our cargo. Captain O'Brien and General Nunez were taken back to the *Silver Heels* on Andros Island and we returned to Jacksonville.

WHEN we returned from a dash into forbidden waters with a cargo of contraband we always planned to make port unobtrusively in the early morning hours while the water-front dozed and testy tempers were still unruffled. There was a comforting feeling of security in being tied up at a friendly wharf within reach of a telegraph office, rather than at sea, when preparing the ship for inspection and ourselves with a plausible alibi. One of the few certainties in an uncertain calling was that someone in Washington, when he could be reached, would intervene in our behalf if the situation got out of hand.

But no such intervention was necessary that morning late in February when we reached Jacksonville from Mantanzas Bay. The *Maine*, and more than two hundred mangled bodies of her crew resting on the bottom of Havana harbour, were silently but effectively interceding for us. No one, including customs inspectors, was interested in filibusters or cared anything about the *Dauntless*. We could have loaded the ship with guns and sailed at high noon, with a brass band on deck, without official interference. An appealing slogan, "Remember the *Maine*," had swept the country. It was to be seen and heard everywhere, stirring up an irresistible demand for war.

Captain O'Brien came down and paid us in full, adding a liberal bonus. Obviously, filibustering as we knew it was doomed. Spanish officials were too busy making concessions in Havana and Washington to notice small leaks in a dyke now threatened with complete destruction. The Cubans still needed all sorts of supplies, but the fun, excitement and thrills had been taken out of delivering them. Nothing remained but the motive of profit, which had not greatly interested Captain O'Brien. The *Dauntless* was to be laid up. She would probably be turned back to her former owners, to resume the dreary routine of towing barges, and I had too much money to be interested in anything of that nature.

Filibustering had come to an end so suddenly as to leave me without plans for the future. Of course I could go back to Iowa.

I would have a lot to tell them; Grandma would be glad; Grandfather would feel my hands approvingly, then begin enumerating advantages of farm life. But deep down within me was a longing for St. Louis. I almost never recalled Dr. Moffett when he was in the more objectionable stages of his dipsomania; practically all my recollections were of the intervals between them, and then not so much of him as of his surroundings. The atmosphere of dignified luxury, his wonderful library, easy-chairs, a smouldering fireplace, Susie tip-toeing about the house, Belle singing spirituals in the kitchen. I meant to go back some time, not in hope of reviving a dead past, but to refresh living memories.

In the meantime I might as well go back to New York. A Mallory liner was in port, sailing that night. Captain Cartyra was packing his things to go on board. I allowed myself the luxury of a first-class ticket and went along with him.

José Cartyra was an ardent revolutionist with the instincts and bearing of a well-bred Spanish gentleman, tempered in the hard crucible of war. His patriotic zeal dated back through Cuba's ten-year insurrection against Spanish tyranny, during the course of which he acquired numerous battle scars and the distinction of having been taken prisoner on two occasions and of being twice condemned to death. As his rich and influential family had remained loyal to Spain throughout the revolution, when the Cubans were finally starved into submission, young Cartyra had been graciously permitted to choose between exile and a third and final death sentence.

He studied medicine at Harvard and law at the Sorbonne, switching later to philosophy. But none of them lessened the burden of his discontent; he could reconcile himself with nothing less than Cuba's political independence. He drifted back to New York, outfitted a fishing schooner and cruised the West Indies, renewing former acquaintances, exploring bays and beaches, conspiring and planning against the day when continued oppression would again ignite the flame of revolt. After ten years of alternating hope and disappointment he gave up. His health impaired and his fortune consumed, he had settled down to the inconsequential job of teaching in a young ladies' seminary.

Consummation of his hopes approached slowly, like the coming of winter; forces were gathering and mounting so imperceptibly they burst upon him unawares. He had lost contact with former

leaders, his following had scattered, he himself was no longer equal to the killing pace of armed conflict. But he possessed something of greater value to the cause he had promoted than physical strength. He had familiarized himself with scores of little-known bays and anchorages on isolated, uninhabited keys and islands adjacent to Cuba, from which munitions could be ferried across to a waiting army. He had learned the haunts of half-savage fishermen and jungle habitants who had cut many a Spanish straggler's throat in the last war, and if armed would do so without compunction in the next. And he knew how to navigate a vessel through narrow, crooked channels and over blind shoals and reefs where chart and compass were useless; where personal knowledge of landmarks, tides and prevailing winds was indispensable. All this and a wealth of general information on local conditions he had placed at Captain O'Brien's disposal.

Cartyra became mildly interested in me when he learned of my interest in Warren's "Household Physician," a fat old volume of medical comment and advice designed for mariners and for home treatment where no doctor was available. I had been reading the book at odd times all winter and thought rather well of it, but Cartyra said it was worthless; it was out of date by at least two generations, and only in the treatment of injuries was it superior to my copy of Hippocrates. His respect for this two-thousand-year-old classic was great, which seemed inconsistent with his contempt for the "Household Physician."

No doubt Dr. Warren was a little remiss in his statement of facts; Cartyra said the only fact in medicine was that sometimes it worked and sometimes it didn't. But in the light of my understanding some of Warren's theories sounded reasonable and all of them had virtues of simplicity. Inherited imperfections in mortal man, he claimed, were matters concerning only the individual and his God; they were demerits of some sort not to be tampered with lightly. On the other hand, acquired diseases were to be pursued relentlessly until driven from the body. They were to be recognized by unmistakable signs and symptoms; their causes were equally unquestionable. Indigestion, constipation, suppressed sweat, clogged pores, noxious vapours and emanations and unexplained changes in body humours and fluids prevented the normal flow of vital forces, causing disease. And the diseases were complicated by exposure to draughts, night air, gluttony, tobacco, modern clothing and original sin. Other causes and complica-

tions may have been listed, but these stand out clearest in my memory.

To combat these adverse conditions, Dr. Warren depended largely on sedatives, tonics, emetics, laxatives, bleeding and blisters. He was hopeful of cures even in unfavourable circumstances. Since circumstances were favourable in inverse ratio to the duration and severity of symptoms, and most favourable while they were still mild and recent—in fact, before they had settled and were plainly manifest—no time need be spent in making fine distinctions. And the treatment should be general and comprehensive, with the object of covering all probabilities.

With few exceptions, the golden rule was to begin with a puke and follow it with a purge. A generous blood-letting was then in order, and a blister was to be applied over the misery. Reasonably enough, the patient may then need a sedative, and later quite obviously a tonic. If these measures left something to be desired, the treatment, or parts of it as indicated, could be repeated or other remedies tried. But they were recommended with diminishing confidence. The disease was probably in the clutches of complications which hindered its cure.

Dr. Warren strongly recommended maintaining an air of optimism in the sick-room. It was permissible and often helpful to engage the patient and his attendant in "light quips and badinage," the relaxing effects of which tended to promote a free flow of restorative fluids. Captain Cartyra was sure his own healing fluids would be permanently shut off in such circumstances; that in comparison the treatment would probably make any disease seem preferable, therefore endurable. In any case the patient would know something was being done for him.

The night before we reached New York from Jacksonville I asked Captain Cartyra whether I should enlist in the army or study medicine. He considered a moment, then wondered why I should not do both.

"If war is declared," he explained, "it will be over in no time at all. Even now Spain is unable to subdue Cuba, thanks to filibustering. She couldn't possibly hold out longer than a few months against the rich and powerful United States.

"If you were to join some temporary unit organized for the emergency," he went on, "you would probably be discharged in

time to enter school this fall. But why do you want to study medicine?"

"Oh, I've a number of reasons—very good ones."

"Tell me one of them," he urged. "The chief one."

My chief reason? Strangely enough, I had given no thought to that. Just what had moved me to make this decision? It was not compassion for suffering humanity. Nor was I aware of any sense of duty or obligation to do good. Medicine was an honourable profession, but so was law, and a winter with Blackstone had settled that. Was it hope of wealth? Not especially; but of course it would be nice to have plenty of money.

I could find no words in which to put my chief reason for wanting to study medicine, but without a doubt my chief inspiration had been Dr. Moffett. A year with that cultured but disreputable rake had revealed glimpses of a life I had come to love and meant to live. Hundreds of sketchy impressions, gained in reading the lives and philosophical comments of the old masters, in which the essence of medicine stood out more clearly than its substance, had been appropriated and idealized to form innumerable pictures, strong in colour and deep in shadows. I could construct them to fit any number of emergencies; I could imagine myself in all sorts of situations.

"Please, doctor, come quickly. He's dying!" Children stepping aside shyly, wide-eyed and respectful. Curious neighbours peeping through drawn window-blinds. A stricken family hovering over the bed. "Oh, doctor, is it serious? Will he be all right? Why, just this morning he . . ."

"This way, doctor. We are so glad you are here." The big house on Grand Avenue, deathlike in its well-ordered stillness. . . .

"Hurry, doctor, he's awful sick." The little house on a side street in an uproar of confusion. . . .

To carry in a little black bag the magic potion of life or death, comfort or pain, hope, confidence and well-being, was a tremendous responsibility. To have my presence a welcome blessing in the innermost sanctuaries; to be a repository of inviolate trusts when fear, anxiety and perhaps penitence force the doors of seclusion and reserve, was a rare privilege. How could I make the pragmatic and often cynical Captain Cartyra understand my reason for wanting to study medicine? How could I tell him that what I wanted above all else was to be wanted?

"Well," I replied lamely, "I've been reading about it almost

two years, everything I can lay my hands on. And the more I read the better I like it. That ought to prove something."

He shrugged uncertainly, saying in effect that it might prove I had wasted a lot of time. One couldn't learn to practise medicine by reading such books as Warren, however often they were brought up to date. It was an art, he said, touched with emotion and implemented in science which must be mastered as an artist masters the colours to be used in his designs. But, unlike him, the medical artist could not duplicate his productions, or even his methods. Each subject was unique, an original creation damaged by wear and tear, age, neglect, misfortune, misuse. And in the process of restoration there were no sketches to consult, no models to copy. Effects could seldom be rehearsed; mistakes could not often be erased or rectified.

Continuing, he said there were already too many people trying to treat the sick without a background of scientific learning, and too many scientists trying to practise medicine by formula. To be a physician in the true sense of the word called for something more than education. He, for example, had studied diligently, only to learn in the end that he was lacking in some undefined leaven which must be mixed with his remedies to make them work. The effect was so discouraging he had soon given up trying.

I admitted it didn't sound very encouraging, unless one, having learned the sciences, has what it takes to make his learning useful.

"That's the point, precisely. The doctor must keep in his mind what his handmaidens can do for him, and what he must do himself. Science is concerned only in the laws and rules she discovers and arranges in orderly system; art deals with things to be done. Science will give him all her information relative to health, diseases and remedies. In the sick-room she will say: 'Here you are, doctor, see what you can make of this. But where is Art? We can't get along without her, and if this man is as sick as he seems to be we'll need judgment, and skill too, if he is to be saved.'

"Science will admit, if pressed, that she is still unable to explain why many die, or get well, with or without her aid, or why many of her curative measures act differently in similar diseases, or have the same effect in different diseases, or no effect at all in others. Her interest is in the demonstrable certainties, and in medicine they are outnumbered two to one by uncertainties."

It was very evident that Captain Cartyra had lost whatever interest he may have had in a medical career. "Until these

questions and many another are answered," he went on, "the practising doctor must content himself with the operations of surgery or the empiricism of a more or less educated medicine man. In either case you'll probably be disillusioned, but if you want to try it I'll give you a note to an old friend with some influence up at Harvard, and if you go ahead, and stick to it, sooner or later the gods will let you know what they think."

IN speaking of Harvard, Captain Cartyra had mentioned the possibility of working one's way through the university and also of loans available to worthy students, giving me to understand I might be favoured in one of these respects if I showed promise. This seemed too good to be true, but certainly was worth looking into. The more I thought of it the greater became my desire to learn, definitely, whether or not I could meet the educational requirements of a first-class medical school, and if so, whether there was a chance to earn or borrow any part of the costs. With this object in mind I went up to Boston.

My note of introduction was to the dean of Harvard Medical School. He was a suave but energetic man well beyond middle age, with a thin greying moustache and a squinting eye, which I learned later was artificial. He read the note with no more than a glance at me; one prospective student more or less was of little interest to him as compared with news of his friend Captain Cartyra.

He wanted to know when I had last seen him, what he was doing, how and where we had met. This brought up the subject of filibustering and the impending war with Spain, which interested him tremendously until we were interrupted by a loud bell. While a crowd of students tramped up a stairway the dean gathered some papers from his desk, turned to me. "I must talk further with you about this," he said, "but I have a class at this hour. Perhaps you would like to attend?"

↳ A small semicircular amphitheatre was already filled with young men when I entered and slid into a seat near the aisle. It was my first medical lecture; it was what I had looked forward to for more than a year. What would it be like? I wondered. The lives and accomplishments of famous doctors? Accidents, diseases, operations? Medicines and how to prepare them? Determined to take in every word, I disregarded the hubbub of loud voices, laughter and scuffling feet which continued until the dean stepped into the pit below us. When comparative quiet had settled over the room he began with a joke which I failed to grasp, then spoke in a dry

barking monotone with an occasional reference to his notes. About half the students were writing rapidly, others paid him the compliment of listening to what he said, still others yawned, whispered, squirmed, looked bored. I recall none of his lecture other than a general impression that he was talking about what might happen to a woman after she had a baby. In an interminable hour the class was dismissed.

"Now, what does Cartyra mean when he says you've been reading medicine for the past year or so?" We were back in the dean's office, where he had lighted a cigar and was puffing it with relish.

"Well, I used to have a friend, a doctor who wanted me to study medicine. He said everyone ought to know the history of his trade, so he started me reading medical history. Later I read Galen, Hippocrates, Ambroise Pare, several others."

"The devil!" He rolled his good eye, remarking something to the effect that my medical friend had the right idea. The ancients should indeed be read by all students, he said, as examples of close observation and clear deductive reasoning.

He stated that the school of medicine had raised its entrance requirements the year before. No one having had less than one year of university training, or its equivalent, could now be accepted: the equivalent being ability to pass an examination in first-year university studies. Among these I recall algebra, botany, chemistry, physics, Latin, English, and French or German. He thought my half-forgotten French would suffice and my Spanish would simplify Latin. English could probably be taken for granted where one read and spoke it intelligibly. But the rules in respect to the others were imperative. He looked at me inquiringly.

"This," I thought, "lets me out of it." A clammy moisture oozed from my brow while I confessed having had two years in grade schools, one in high and none in college. He asked me what private schools I had attended. None? Well, he had always held that good home training and a competent tutor had not yet been surpassed by any system of public education. Fortunately, he went no further in this and asked for no credentials; he evidently assumed that anyone recommended by Cartyra had some sort of educational background.

Had I known the disadvantages in being overrated I would not have invested in my first made-to-measure suit of clothes before leaving New York, and in Boston I would not have taken a room at the Parker House. In that event I might very likely

have begun my formal education at Harvard University. Some method would have been found to finance it. But, believing this to be a very important occasion, I had wanted to make a favourable impression, and in doing so unwittingly created a false one. The dean, probably thinking anyone wearing expensive clothing and living in an expensive hotel must be in easy circumstances, said nothing about scholarships, loans or part-time jobs; and while I had gone rather thoroughly into the manner of aiding the Cuban revolutionists, I could not bring up the subject of assisting distressed students.

Continuing, he asked a number of questions which seemed to have little or no bearing on the matter in hand; then found some copies of former examinations which he said gave an idea of their scope. He hastened to add that I should by no means limit myself to learning the answers, nor should I take too seriously the claims of coaching schools; doubtless a certain amount of information for emergency use could be crammed into the heads of backward or dilatory students, but knowledge so gained added nothing to one's sound education. And, finally, he thought if I studied industriously and wisely I could pass all the tests. If I failed I would doubtless make enough credits to enter the university in September, and one term there would qualify me for the medical school.

I had looked forward to this interview with considerable apprehension; another dean whom I had bearded in his den had taken my ten-dollar matriculation fee and thrown me out. And I recognized the same slightly fetid odour, thinly disguised with carbolic, that had permeated the medical school in St. Louis. There was, however, a decided difference; even the smell of these laboratories and dissecting rooms had a faintly aromatic quality, reminding me of ships' holds and tropical cargoes. In the lecture room I had visualized this dean as another Captain O'Brien, giving his peremptory orders in purest Bostonese. But here in the privacy of his office his gracious manner was that of another Dr. Moffett, confirmed by something which was lacking in that unfortunate man. His easy-going assurance was both disarming and contagious; while in his presence it seemed a small matter to study all summer in the hope of beginning a four-year course of further study in the fall, costing ten or twelve hundred dollars a year, with less than one hundred dollars remaining of the three hundred I had received upon leaving the *Dauntless*.

Promising to return at an early date, I went back to the hotel,

one question still in doubt, but with an answer to the other. No less a personage than the dean himself had said I could qualify for Harvard after a few months' preliminary study. Nothing remained but to find a good job, save my money and prepare for an examination in September.

The first invitation to a job appeared in an advertisement calling for workers in a shoe factory down at Taunton; an apprentice was wanted in the finishing department at good wages, with rapid advancement. As the success of my ambitious plans was dependent on finding steady work, I was at the factory door at seven o'clock next morning.

The boss, an ingratiating old fellow with a long white beard, showed me a sanding machine and explained its operation, then demonstrated its use in smoothing the heels and soles of men's cheap shoes. Turning on the power, he grasped a shoe firmly and brushed the flat surface of the heel and then the sole against a swiftly revolving cylinder covered with sandpaper. That was all there was to it. The pay, he informed me, was on a unit system at a rate of ten cents for sanding one dozen pairs of shoes. Skilled operators earned as much as twenty dollars a week or even more. He handed me a shoe, asked me to try it. Complimenting me on getting the idea so readily, he was sure I would become a first-rate workman in no time at all.

As an afterthought he supposed I understood the terms of employment; apprentices were not paid for the first week of training, but for the second week they were given three dollars. If they made good they were then put on the regular piece-work rate. In explanation he said the company had to protect itself against loss while teaching young men valuable trades. Many beginners were careless, others were dumb, still others wanted only a few days' work. Men of this type damaged a lot of shoes, costing the company a great deal of money; therefore they were taking on no apprentices who were unwilling to give their time, as the company gave its materials. That seemed fair enough in the light of a prospective twenty-dollar-a-week job.

By quitting time I had sanded nine dozen pairs of shoes, earning a theoretical ninety cents. Not bad, I thought. Not at all bad, said the boss; not one man in ten had done so well the first day. That night I found a boarding house at five dollars a week, in advance. Next morning I was back at the factory.

Had I been on a so-called unit system the first week I would

have averaged nearly two dollars a day, and, incredibly, my earnings the second week under the same system would have amounted to eighteen dollars. On the strength of this I began studying algebra.

The following Monday I knew that something was wrong with my boss and began suspecting his system; he examined my work closely and gave signs of having indulged himself in misplaced confidence in me. Tuesday he sent back some shoes to be done over. Wednesday he sent back some more. Thursday the ad. calling for an apprentice appeared in an evening newspaper, and Friday he sprung the bad news. I had, it seems, done exceedingly well, but not quite well enough to warrant putting me on the regular unit system. But he had raised my wages to four dollars a week and was quite sure I could go on piece-work in a very short time.

So that was his game. I had worked nearly three weeks sanding about four hundred dozen pairs of shoes; I had earned forty-five dollars, of which he had paid me three and proposed paying me four more. There was nothing I could do about it but tell the old crook what I thought of him, and slap his face, which led to a real fight with another and much younger man. It was upon him that I made up joyfully with my fists any inefficiency the older man may have found in my work. There were threats of arrest, but no call for the police, and at the boarding house they said my experience differed only in its final scene from that of many another hopeful apprentice. To this day I hate the sight of shoe factories.

Back in New York there were invitations everywhere to enlist in the army for a period of three years, but no work even for a day. For the first time in my life I watched my savings dwindle from day to day with a sickening dread. In the past I had been broke repeatedly and for weeks on end with no feelings of alarm or special regret, and at no great inconvenience. But the imminence of having neither money nor job was now a matter of grave concern.

Each morning I studied the ads., applied early, stated my case earnestly but unsuccessfully. At the Cuban headquarters in New Street the few people I had known had gone; following a declaration of war with Spain, the office had been practically given over to a variegated crowd of West Indians waiting for something to

turn up. At length I carried my sixty-dollar suit back to the tailor to pawn it for five; while this money held out I would keep on looking for a job, and when it was gone I would get out of town.

I considered going to Alaska. A shipload of gold had arrived in San Francisco from the Klondyke; prospectors were stampeding into the country by thousands. Fortunes were being made in a week, overnight if one were lucky. I could beat my way to Seattle, work my way north on a steamer. Where money was so plentiful there must be good jobs and high wages.

But I wanted to get into this war, and all the luck I had known since leaving the *Dauntless* was bad. To be broke where I knew my way around was bad enough; it would be a thousand times worse in a God-forsaken country like Alaska. A battery of light artillery was being organized and outfitted uptown by a wealthy New Yorker, to be presented to the Government for the duration of the war. It was reputed to be very exclusive. Captain Cartyra had suggested finding something of the kind as an alternative to studying medicine, which now had to be deferred indefinitely. This private military establishment might be worth looking into.

A severely taxed regular army sergeant was in charge of the battery's recruiting office. One could perceive that his patience was being sorely tried, that his inclination to blow up was repressed with difficulty. But to have bawled out the elderly men of affairs and dowagers of august presence inquiring into the meaning of war, and into what was in store for those who participated in it, would have called for a temerity unrestrained.

"There is a difference, isn't there, between volunteers and just common soldiers?"

"Will there be any great danger?"

"Must our boys come into very close contact with low persons?"

The sergeant assured one and all patiently that it would be a very respectable little war. "Yes, ma'am, there is a big difference between these men and regular soldiers! That's right—a personally conducted vacation with pay at Government expense. No, ma'am, not a chance; the officers will see to that. Such women are not allowed within a mile of camp. Yes, ma'am, they'll be well taken care of. Plenty of outdoor exercise, regular hours, good wholesome food." And so on.

I stood around waiting for a moment favourable to my own inquiries while the sergeant told a buck-toothed prospect there was no chance for hand-to-hand fighting in the artillery; the

enemy was miles away. He glanced up and gave me a solemn wink, a good omen, which I returned promptly. When it came my turn he said the battery would probably be sent to the Philippine Islands. They'd have to take on a few soldiers to break in this bunch of rookies, but he could find a place for anyone who spoke Spanish and had been running guns into Cuba under "Dynamite Johnny" O'Brien. If I came back tomorrow and passed the doctor he'd swear me in.

At last my luck had turned, but not until the few dollars I could borrow on my only complete suit of clothes had been nibbled down to a meagre eighty cents. Tomorrow I would have a steady job for at least a year, and soon I would be on my way to the Philippines. But as I walked down-town from the recruiting office my thoughts were far from satisfying. I had hoped the battery would be sent to Cuba; each year the longing to visit my birthplace had deepened, each year my curiosity in respect to my mother's family had grown more consuming. And on several occasions Tantatus had led me to the open door to my desire, only to slam it shut before I could enter.

Safely outside Cuban waters I had circumnavigated the island three times, wondering what souvenirs were concealed in those dim blue-grey hills and indentations. Possibly in that exact valley at which I was staring lay my grandfather's plantation; possibly at that very minute some unknown relative was gazing out to sea and at the little ship steaming past so brazenly. I had often been within a few yards of the beach, but only on dark nights, and once at Nuevitas I had waded ashore to sense the heavy fragrance of tropical vegetation, the incessant murmur of jungle creatures, the black silhouettes of palms and giant ferns against the blue-black sky. But the moist, fertile land and all that existed by reason of it were known only by what I had read and felt in my bones.

Tomorrow I would be in the army, but this evening I was free, and for the first time in many days I would have a good dinner. I ran over in my mind, not what I most wanted, but what I could get the most of for sixty-five cents; I must save fifteen cents for breakfast. . . .

On Fourteenth Street I saw a man whom I knew but could not immediately identify. Evidently he was a stranger to New York and from the west, but where? Who was he? Where had I known him? He spoke to a policeman, then continued up the street. I

hurried past and stopped at Fourth Avenue, watched him approach.

It was Seth Bullock, Deadwood's famous sheriff since the town's earliest days, an officer who scorned the use of a gun and was known to everyone in the Black Hills as the man who always brought in his prisoner alive. No doubt his pleased expression on recognizing me was impersonal; any familiar face in the crowd on Fourteenth Street would have looked good to him. But when he asked me to have dinner with him across the street my own pleasure was personal and genuine; in Deadwood every youngster had admired Seth Bullock tremendously, as they would in New York had they known him; and, furthermore, there was that matter of my last sixty-five cents.

Over a feast of pigs' knuckles, sauerkraut and imported beer I told him I was signing up tomorrow with the Astor Battery. "But you don't have to go halfway around the world to get action," he objected. "If that's what you're looking for, you can find it with us in Cuba. Down in San Antonio we're rounding up the best cavalry outfit in the country; picked men and all of them fighters, or at least able to look out for themselves while we're making fighters out of 'em."

Theodore Roosevelt, one of his best friends, was at the head of it. He was going back to Washington in a day or so and would speak to Roosevelt about me. And he would give me a note now to Colonel Wood, in San Antonio. If I moved fast I could catch them before they left for Tampa.

So one of my most ardent wishes was coming true! It was almost beyond belief and I wanted to be off at once; to wait until morning seemed a useless waste of time. I was going back to Cuba after all, and by stretching the imagination I was returning in what could be called an official capacity. . . .

There would be no creeping up to unfrequented beaches in the darkest hours of night, to be surrounded by a horde of natives jabbering a strange jargon while dragging supplies into the jungle. . . .

An invading army from the United States would not have to land surreptitiously, but in broad daylight under the guns of battle-ships. The First Volunteer Cavalry, already famous as Roosevelt's Rough Riders, would soon swarm into Havana, where I would learn the meaning of those vague disjointed images I had cherished since childhood. Somewhere within or near that city I would find an answer to the riddle of my ancestry, which, according to General Nunez, was nothing to be proud of; it was the hated privileged class, of which the Solanos and the Salcedos were representative, that had so grievously oppressed the Cubans, and General Solano y Moreno, my grandfather, was the worst of the lot. . . .

But Captain Cartyra, whose hatred of tyranny was more general and impersonal than was that of Nunez, had said the oppressor himself was often an unwilling or passive victim of circumstances or custom he was powerless to remedy; it was the system making such oppression possible which must be destroyed, not merely its beneficiaries.

The only annoying feature in the stream of thoughts which raced through my mind as the evening advanced was that Bullock's note, written on a menu in Luchow's restaurant in New York to Colonel Leonard Wood in Texas, must be delivered without delay.

At dinner I had admitted that while my funds were low they were sufficient to take me to San Antonio. This was true, but not in the sense implied and not to the extent it would have been in

former days; in the far-distant past to have undertaken a trip halfway across the continent on eighty cents, or even less than that, would have been nothing to worry about. Bullock said the Rough Riders would be leaving San Antonio in a couple of weeks; with experience one could reach there from New York in half that time. But with my maturity had come certain aversions, outstanding among them being filthy box-cars, dirty tramps and bull-necked railroad police. The thought of renewing their acquaintance even for a week was hateful.

Starting from Jersey City next morning in a drenching rain, which wet me to the skin before I could catch a west-bound freight train, my clothing had not thoroughly dried when I reached Kansas City seven days later, four days behind my schedule. It was clear that my reformation had cost me something in proficiency; never before had so much adversity clung to me so tenaciously and so long. Often within a few minutes and usually in less than an hour I had been put off every train I had boarded in daylight, and on several occasions in a pouring rain. I had been arrested six times, for nothing more heinous than stealing rides, and would have pondered my patriotic zeal in various county bastilles for days on end were it not for that note of recommendation to Colonel Wood. The police to a man were sceptical of its authenticity, but none of them were quite willing to take a chance; therefore they grudgingly allowed me to proceed.

Two nights and a day in Kansas City, drying my clothes and stuffing myself in restaurants while earning several dollars washing dishes, comforting myself with a conviction that bad luck always changes. Five days remained in which to reach my destination, and I was sure I could make it in three.

My luck did indeed change, but it was for the worse. In Topeka I was again arrested, and in spite of Bullock's note spent the night in jail. Next day I rode the rods under a baggage car into Wichita. That night I hopped a fast freight south-bound. I was doing well; San Antonio was a small matter of two days distant.

When about twenty miles out of Wichita a jolting, grinding crash hurled me across the car; then, as it reared upwards and rolled over, I tumbled back and lodged against the wall. For several minutes I was too stunned to realize what had happened, too fearful of what might follow to care and too painfully bruised to move. Experimentally I turned my head, tested my hands,

arms, legs, bringing on an agonizing pain in one knee. But I could move, however painfully, and finally stand erect. In total darkness I lighted a match to get my bearings.

The car was lying on its side at a steep angle, with one end crushed inward. One of the side doors had been thrown open by the impact, but was out of reach above my head; the other door was immovable against the ground. After what seemed hours I heard footsteps outside; a gruff voice answered me. A few minutes later I was hoisted through the door and lowered to the ground.

A broken rail had thrown nine cars into the ditch, damaged nearly a mile of track. I was the only casualty. One of the brakemen walked to a village, telegraphed to Wichita for a wrecker. I sat beside the track nursing my sprained knee and wondering when, if ever, I would get to San Antonio.

Shortly after dawn a wrecking crew arrived, made temporary repairs. The men were interested in my hard luck to the extent of sharing their food, and one of them fashioned a crutch which made it possible for me to walk. They said no trains would pass that way for a day at least; traffic would be routed around the wreck. I could ride back to Wichita with them that evening, but was stuck for the day and might as well make the best of it.

Next morning, stiff and sore and bemoaning the money spent for bed and breakfast, I managed to catch a south-bound freight, only to be put off at Arkansas City. That night I climbed aboard a blind baggage, pulled myself to the top of the car and crawled back to the diner, where I wedged myself between the ventilator and the crown. Considerable heat from the range came up agreeably through the pipe, and as I fitted tightly into the narrow space there was no great danger of rolling off on curves. But the situation was not conducive to complete equanimity. I had had no dinner, a fact kept in my mind by savoury fumes rising through the ventilator from the kitchen below me. But more disturbing still were reports, current on the road and corroborated by the wrecking crews: owing to frequent train robberies in Oklahoma and beyond, anyone seen riding on top of a passenger train at night was a lawful target to be first shot, then perhaps questioned. This was probably an exaggeration, but the idea was disquieting.

The night was overcast but warm, and discomforts arising out of a gusty wind, flying sparks and cinders and an injured knee were partly compensated by knowing I was speedily nearing my journey's end. The noise was deafening, yet not particularly

nerve-racking; one could imagine himself racing through a land of shadowy spectres, appearing suddenly, then receding into a black oblivion. Sensations reaching me through tightly closed eyes and closely wrapped face and neck were a curious blending of anxious triumph and unreality. Alone and adrift in a moaning, rumbling inferno, with neither kith nor kin to aid or hinder, I was an ill-starred hostage of fate, fleeing a throng of wailing banshees to a rendezvous which might well alter the entire course of my life. Swaying sinuously around curves, coughing hoarsely up grades and gliding swiftly down, the train was a monstrous dragon, spewing fire and smoke as it bored into the night and shrieked its warnings to give way; there must be no interference with destiny.

Before entering a town after dawn, to escape discovery it was necessary to crawl over the car's crown to the side opposite the railroad station. At forty miles an hour there was nothing unreal about this, especially with a game leg to coddle and an unwieldy crutch to guard. Providentially I reached Fort Worth, and miraculously was not arrested. A coal-black porter grinned encouragingly as he watched me climbing down, doubtless in the reasonable belief that I too was coloured; then, shaking his head and muttering, he marched off. Coated with soot and grime, I must have presented a sorry spectacle, but there was neither time nor disposition for self-criticism; this was my lucky day, this my lucky train, changing engines, making ready to depart. Across the track was a small, not-too-good-looking restaurant where by paying the Greek in advance I was permitted to gobble hot coffee and sandwiches. When the train pulled out I swung to the brake-beam under the last coach and rode undisturbed into Austin. That afternoon I caught a blind baggage to San Antonio.

What I learned within the first five minutes after arriving was enough to chill the enthusiasm that had warmed and sustained me through thirteen luckless days. While I was hobbling around a wrecked freight train in southern Kansas, watching the sun creep above a level horizon to brighten a desolate landscape and cheer my despondency, the Rough Riders were leaving San Antonio for Tampa.

My spirits at an all-time low, I sat on a baggage truck grasping at straws, wondering what I should do. My informant seemed to know what he was talking about, but was his information complete? Everyone may not have gone. Someone, perhaps Colonel Wood himself, may have remained behind to look after odds and

ends neglected in the hurry of breaking camp. Even if everyone had gone I could catch up with them; I had made more than five hundred miles in the past twenty-four hours and could do it again if my luck held. That was the point; should I tackle ten or twelve hundred miles more of the same, on a chance that it would hold?

Many times in the past two weeks I had said to myself, "This is the end of beating my way on trains. If I ever reach San Antonio I'm through! No more crouching on the rods and brakebeams within inches of cold steel rails and grinding wheels where one false move meant instant death, or blind baggages, box-cars, dodging the police or snivelling before hick-town judges." The more I considered the matter, the more sensible it appeared to make good that promise.

An old negro porter dozing in the Hotel Royal, Rooms 500 and up, opened his sleepy eyes, shook his head wearily and growled, "'Tain't no use askin' fer nothin', white boy,' cause I can't do it an' the boss's in bed."

With understanding of and affection for the type, I laid a half-dollar on the counter and beside it a quarter. "Now listen, Uncle Mose, I want a good room with plenty of hot water and soap, and I want you to have my shirt and socks washed and this suit cleaned tonight. You understand?"

He rubbed his eyes, grinned, picked up the money. "Scuse me, Cap'n—yes, suh! I sho' does." He found a key and led me to a small but apparently clean room, then to a bath at the end of the hall. "They ain't no hot water, Cap'n, but we's got a lot of soap. Jes yo' stomp on the flo' when yo's done and I'll teck keer of yo'r things."

Emerging later in a state of cleanliness which many a patron of more exclusive hotels could have seen but to envy, I stomped on the flo' and turned in. Next morning, in a nicely ironed shirt, polished shoes, clothes well brushed and pressed, a leisurely fifteen-cent breakfast again reduced my cash to less than a dollar. But my mind was at ease; I had decided definitely to stop right there until I could do my travelling inside a passenger train, not under or on top of it.

I liked San Antonio, its narrow, crooked streets, adobe houses, indolent crowds and half-naked children chattering a bastard Spanish which I could scarcely understand, but which was a delight to hear. I liked it well enough to write asking a friend in

New York with whom I had stored an old trunk to ship it to me at once, C.O.D. That afternoon I found a job in the old Menger Hotel at six dollars a week; that evening I talked my way back into my former room in the Hotel Royal at a special weekly rate of two dollars, not necessarily in advance. I was getting on in the world; even my very recent resolve to settle down had established a credit.

One evening several weeks later I went out to a German beer garden some three or four miles from town. A new state hospital for the insane had been built near by to relieve overcrowding in other similar institutions, and over a glass of beer with an employee I gathered that this one was, indeed, a mad-house in every sense of the word.

Patients were being crowded into unfinished buildings with no adequate facilities for their care: other hospitals had made the most of a grand opportunity to get rid of their worst cases, whose dispositions had by no means improved by the excitement of moving into strange surroundings. Quite the contrary. Many of the nurses and attendants were inexperienced in caring for the insane and, finally, the superintendent, Dr. Graves, was laid up with an infected foot. All in all, it seemed to be an interesting situation and a favourable time and place to look for a steady job.

DR. GRAVES was still in bed when I called next day, but after a rather good line of reasons for wanting to see him I was taken to his quarters by Dr. Turner, an assistant.

"This young man says he's a medical student in need of a job," he began by way of introduction. "No bad habits, dependable, handy with tools and a first-class painter. And he's willing to work and wait for his pay until the Legislature meets."

Dr. Graves looked at me sharply. "Well, that sounds promising, anyway. Sit down; tell me something about yourself. Where are you from? Just how much do you know about painting?"

What I really knew, when combined with what I convinced him I could quickly learn, was enough to warrant giving me a trial. Next morning I began painting the wards, an endless job at which I worked intermittently with one or more patients as helpers for more than a year. After the first month I was carried on the books as a male nurse, there being an appropriation for that service, but as yet no appointment to the job. This, and the fact that I was, in intent at least, a medical student, gave me a standing different from that of the regulation asylum employee, not necessarily higher, but with more privileges, which I was careful not to abuse. By days I was a painter, but I loafed and soon also worked in the pharmacy, studied chemistry and physics along with pharmacology and materia medica, watched an occasional minor operation, made myself generally useful. The experience gave me an insight into one of life's most pitiable tragedies with which I was entirely unacquainted, and in which I found a deep and lasting interest.

The South-western "Insane Asylum," as such institutions were commonly known before mental derangements were recognized as diseases to be treated in hospitals, was situated behind a sloping lawn overlooking miles of lonely chaparral. Off to one side, beyond a fringe of scrawny willows marking the San Antonio River, the crumbling walls and tower of an abandoned two-hundred-year-old Spanish Mission seemed to watch cynically over

those surrendered bodies and decaying minds confined in the asylum.

Designed along conventional lines with a view to economy of space and facility of control, the regulation administration building, topped with a white cupola and bell, connected three-storied male wards on the left and female on the right into a single unit. In the rear were various workshops, storerooms, stables, a power plant, laundry, kitchen, and a number of small cottages for married employees. It gave sanctuary to approximately five hundred patients, requiring the services of a medical superintendent, two assistant physicians and a corps of about fifty more or less skilled employees whose duties were chiefly custodial; most of the actual work was done by patients under guard.

Inmates, as they were called, were classified descriptively as observation and convalescent, quiet and clean, and violent and filthy, domiciled on the first, second and third floors respectively. The state provided them cheap but wholesome food, comfortable shelter, kept them reasonably clean, and, if docile, encouraged them to take plenty of exercise on the farm, in the shops and laundry, wherever work was to be done about the buildings and grounds. Leisure among those sane enough to enjoy it was discouraged as likely to induce brooding, which in turn was apt to increase dissatisfaction, if not dementia. Sundays and rainy days were spent as they chose so long as they obeyed orders, were quiet and remained in the ward or with an attendant. For recreation there were the regular Friday night dances.

All employees were expected to attend these functions at least twice a month and to dance at least three times with inmates, selected in recognition of good behaviour from the first and second floor wards. An orchestra came out from San Antonio, inmates and employees swarmed into the hall; by appearance and conduct a stranger would have had difficulty differentiating employee from inmate, sane from insane. Square dances alternated with round; inmate was paired with employee in quadrille or Lancers and the changes were called and embellished with amazingly nimble steps and gyrations by a reformed, or perhaps backslid, minister. In the hope of repressing eroticism, always a grave problem, no inmate was allowed to participate in round dances. One of them told me candidly that they were not allowed to waltz because it rattled the loose screws in their heads.

Aside from obvious imbeciles, half-wits and those afflicted with

profound melancholy or acute mania, the thing impressing me most forcibly in respect to the insane was their apparent sanity. For a month or more I strongly suspected that many inmates were victims of gross injustice, if not persecution, and I was certain that one of my helpers was sane; his story of dirty work in the family was complete to the last detail and sounded wholly plausible.

He said he had inherited from his father a very rich farm, which an elder brother, after having squandered his own inheritance, wanted badly, but which he himself had repeatedly refused to sell. When his wife died in childbirth he had sought, and found, a measure of consolation in tequilla, a fiery Mexican distillate from the native cactus.

"I used to get pretty drunk all right," he admitted, "and I was one of those fellows who shouldn't drink at all. Naturally quick-tempered, the stuff made me quarrelsome. One day when I had been drinking, a Mexican sold me a horse which turned out to be blind. When I raised hell about it we got into a fight and I cracked him over the head with a singletree. Knocked him cold, I did. He didn't even kick.

"Killing a Mexican wasn't counted much of a crime down there," he went on, "but this was different. This man's brother-in-law was the sheriff and a good many people were related to him in one way or another. I heard at the time that my brother Joe was stirring up trouble, but didn't believe it. Anyway, I was arrested, and Joe fixed it up with a lawyer to have me plead insanity; they said that was the easier way out of it; that I'd be sent up to Austin, and in a month or so when the affair blew over they'd turn me out. Joe got himself appointed my guardian, took over my farm, sold the best part of it.

"Well, I was in that bug-house up there nearly a year. The doctors knew I wasn't crazy and were getting ready to turn me out when Joe heard about it, had them move me down here, where I guess I'll stay the rest of my life, unless someone gets me out so I can go down and talk to that judge. Joe—why, he never even answers my letters."

I questioned him shrewdly from time to time, but could bring out no material discrepancies in his story; he was not to be tripped or shaken. He was teachable and wanted to work, saying it kept his mind off his troubles. His religious views were vague, but not queer; he seemed to hold no malice towards anyone. I asked him what he would do to his brother if and when he got out.

"Nothing," he replied. "I'd only get myself into more trouble. I reckon I had something coming to me for killing that greaser, and I wouldn't have minded going to the pen for it; I'd rather be there than in a bug-house, wouldn't you? The trouble is that by the time Joe runs through my money and lets them turn me out I'll be lucky if I ain't crazy, sure enough."

If anything was needed to confirm my belief that many an unfortunate individual had been carelessly or criminally sent to an insane asylum, here it was: a clear-cut case. How many others were there? I wondered. How many parents had suffered similar injustice, under protection of law, at the hands of their children? How many wives from husbands? Something ought to be done about it.

Fortunately, I decided to mention this matter to Dr. Graves before taking any steps myself towards helping this man escape. To my astonishment I learned that my helper was positively and incurably insane, a simple case of what was then called *dementia præcox*. There was no foundation in fact for any part of his story; he had never owned a farm, probably not even a horse. His father and mother were still living about twenty miles from San Antonio. He had never married, and had killed no one. Twice adjudged insane, he had spent eight years in the asylum at Austin before being transferred to San Antonio, that his family might visit him. The revelation was very instructive and very embarrassing.

While I regained my composure and my face its normal colour, Dr. Graves gave me a friendly little talk on the danger in allowing sympathy to get out of hand, and years later at a meeting of the American Medical Association in Dallas, where we both were delegates, he gave me a solemn wink when a paper on paranoid personalities was read.

Of slight build and pleasing appearance, Dr. Graves had quizzical brown eyes which reflected interest but no suggestion of inquisitiveness. He had a gift of perceiving without seeming to see, of understanding and making himself understood without the need of explanations. Widely known throughout Texas as a neurologist, he was in fact a very able psychiatrist, although that word was not yet in general use, and psychotherapy was rather in general disrepute. Where no physical cause for aberrations of the mind could be found they were looked upon as inherited or developmental defects, therefore incurable. If the mentally ill possessed gravely objectionable or potentially harmful qualities

which seemed to call for restraint, or if for any other reason one's "queerness" was deemed a nuisance, he was arrested, clapped into jail and eventually tried before a lay jury of his peers. If the jury also was "queer" it might find him sane; otherwise his eccentricity would very likely land him in an insane asylum. Efforts were made there to maintain his general health: his excitement was quieted or his depression stimulated along lines very similar to those recommended in Warren's "Household Physician," *circa* 1850. Psychoanalysis, now so popular and effective in selected cases, was then but a theory resolving in Sigmund Freud's mind and accepted elsewhere with reservations.

Nevertheless, the medical staff at San Antonio knew what it wanted to do and how to go about it. More than half the patients, men and women, were brought in handcuffed and many were in leg-irons or strait-jackets. The usual procedure in those cases was a revelation to me and often a source of consternation to those accompanying the victims. Dr. Graves would perhaps be sitting behind his desk, Drs. Turner or Moody waiting in the office, a supervisor of the receiving ward close at hand. The patient was carried or dragged in, laid on the floor or jammed into a chair with one or more guards gripping him tightly.

Dr. Graves chatted with the sheriff a moment, glanced at the court order of commitment. Then, stepping over to look kindly into the patient's face and address him by name, he usually ordered all restraining appliances removed.

This gave rise to consternation. "Look out, Doc; he's a bad one, I tell you. Why, he like to killed a feller the other day, an' we'd a-never got him down here if we hadn't a-tied him up."

Or: "My God! Don't take them cuffs off; she'll scratch your eyes out. She's crazy!"

There were, of course, exceptions. Many came in more or less willingly, or insensibly, and many another bore no visible marks of mental or physical peculiarity. In one instance which I recall, Dr. Moody, assuming from appearances that one of the guards was to be the state's guest, started leading him to the door. But the picture remaining in my mind most clearly is of the new arrival rubbing his wrists or ankles gratefully and perhaps attempting to explain. If not obviously violent or wholly demented, he was first taken to the receiving ward to be examined and classified, then removed to the middle or top floor.

For several months I had been learning to put up prescriptions,

do urinalyses, use a microscope and, occasionally, assist Dr. Moody perform autopsies. Early in my second year I was promoted to the office of pharmacist, a job not quite as important as it may sound, but invaluable to me in experience. I now carried a pass-key to all the wards, making morning and evening rounds to deliver medicines, pick up prescriptions and bottles to refill.

A complete stock of commonly used drugs was kept on hand, but relatively few of them were used; opium or one of its derivatives was the favourite sedative, *nux vomica* or its alkaloid strychnine was given alone or in combination with iron and quinine for stimulation, various elixirs, tinctures and bitters; Epsom salts and castor oil. A favourite remedy when nothing else seemed to be indicated was potassium iodide, given as an alterative. No one knew how or why it worked, or, in fact, just what was to be expected of an alterative other than to change for the better whatever ailed the patient. But all the doctors professed great faith in it.

One of the quickest-acting and most reliable drugs then administered was apomorphia, given hypodermically in one-tenth grain doses in certain cases of acute mania or of chronic cussedness. Its effects were immediate and spectacular, causing a most sickening nausea, followed by relaxation and sleep. Unruly and noisy patients were thus usually subdued within a few minutes, and after experiencing its effects would frequently calm down upon catching sight of the syringe.

I knew of not more than half a dozen instances of cruelty to patients while I was there, and in each case the offending attendant was summarily discharged. This is not to say that all patients were not kept under more or less restraint, and some of them disciplined. They were, but the measures used were surprisingly simple and humane. In this respect Dr. Graves was far in advance of his time. He held that, however great the provocation, it must be remembered that to beat intractability aggravated by insanity into submission was merely to fortify resentment with hatred. Attendants were taught a modified form of jiu-jitsu and were expected to control their patients, but not to punish them. If they failed in the one or indulged in the other they lost their jobs. Firmness and fearlessness, opiates, an empty padded room and, rarely in cases of pure meanness, a light switching or a threat of it seemed to be all that was required.

With his wide experience, Dr. Graves admitted having a very

sketchy definition of insanity, saying that he often was unable to draw an exact line between the sane and the insane. He said it was largely a matter of personal adjustment and degree: how well one was able to meet his problems, respond to logical reasoning, conduct himself becomingly to his environment and station in life. As an example he said a man habitually relieving himself in the street in San Antonio would probably land in jail or an asylum, but might be unnoticed in France or Italy.

Aside from injuries, he believed derangements of the mind most often derived from degenerative diseases of the body, among which he placed alcoholic and other intoxications first, with syphilis and senility contesting for second place. He thought some inherited or acquired constitutional defect was present in most of them, although it could not always be found.

DUE to the nature of state appropriations and the exigencies of hospital management, my elevation to the position of pharmacist brought with it no increase in pay. As a painter I drew the wages of a nurse, thirty dollars a month, including board, room and laundry. When the pharmacist resigned I had taken over his work under direction of Dr. Moody, at my former wages, the balance of that appropriation being applied to the salary of a chief clerk.

In the beginning I had resolved to save twenty dollars a month towards my medical education. But the need of a complete outfit of clothing soon cut it down to ten, which in a month or so was reduced to five and later to zero; at the end of nine months my total cash resources were exactly my last month's pay cheque. Something had to be done about that, although there was some consolation in the fact that I was well supplied with clothes, had a new trunk, a watch, camera, and a library of five new medical books in addition to my Hippocrates and "Household Physician." But there was regret in realizing that I had wasted a lot of money on trifles, and discouragement in finding that the half-dozen or more catalogues from medical colleges I had collected gave entrance requirements and costs beyond my reach.

"What you need is a good manager," said Dr. Graves when I told him my troubles. "Someone to save your money and keep your feet on the ground."

"I realize that," I replied, "so I came in to ask if I may draw half my pay each month and leave the rest of it with you."

He considered the matter, then shook his head. "No; you probably think you'd like to save some money if it can be done painlessly, without denying yourself the things you want. It isn't done that way, not on thirty dollars a month."

"But I don't want very much now. I have everything I need."

"Very well, then you don't need any money at all. When I was preparing myself for medical school I got along very nicely on fifty cents a week. You say you want to save for a medical education, yet you plan on spending fifteen dollars a month."

What he said was only too true. Never since I ran away from the

farm in Iowa had I denied myself anything for the sole purpose of saving against some future need. Money was worth only what it would buy, and anything I saved was either because I was so situated it could not be spent readily, or I had no pressing wants. On many an occasion I had stretched dollars and even dimes to make them last, but never to watch them grow.

"But suppose I agree to get along on half what you had to spend," I proposed, laying the cheque on his desk, "on one dollar a month? I'm sure I can do it, with a little moral support. I'll agree to give you my cheque each month if you will lend me the dollar."

He picked up the cheque, hesitated, then put it into the safe and handed me the money. "Just as an experiment I'll try you out; we'll see whether you have anything in you worth the trouble of saving or if it is now too late. But remember, this experiment ends the first time you break your agreement."

He stood beside the safe gazing at me a long moment. "Sit down. I'm going to give you some advice.

"Now, if you have made up your mind definitely to study medicine it's time you were getting down to business, which means deciding where you want to go, and when, and sticking to it. Don't worry, or even think about entrance requirements. They're much the same in all good schools, and are for the purpose of weeding out incompetence and making reasonably sure the student is teachable, that he can grasp and put to good use what he is to be taught. Moody says you are good at that, that what you are learning here should make up for what you lack in formal education. So don't look for a school that's easy to get into, or has a fancy catalogue or a high-sounding name. Good schools don't have to advertise extensively and you shouldn't waste your time on poor ones."

"Both large and small medical schools have advantages and disadvantages," he resumed presently—"prestige in the one and more or less individual instruction in the other. A number of small schools give very good courses of study, perhaps better than some great universities in which an excellent student without wealth or influence might be overlooked, and others graduated with nothing to recommend them as doctors but a diploma from a famous school. On the whole you'll probably do better in a small but good one, where whatever talents you have are not apt to escape recognition."

At the end of the month a small fraction of my one dollar allowance was still unspent, as was another dollar won from Dr. Moody by having lived up to my agreement. This gave me at least fifteen dollars' worth of satisfaction; as a matter of fact I saved twenty-nine dollars of my pay every month thereafter.

Turning in my cheque to Dr. Graves for safe keeping was not nearly so hard as following the schedule of homework he prescribed. One morning while inspecting the pharmacy he ran across one of my new books, a treatise on mental and nervous diseases.

"You are not spending any time on this, are you?" he asked.

"Yes, indeed, I'm nearly half through it. Dr. Moody says it's one of the latest and best."

"So it is for him, but not for you. It will be years before you are ready for anything like that. What you should do is read ten or fifteen pages of Gray's 'Anatomy' every day."

"But I'm not specially interested in anatomy," I protested. "I'm going to be a neurologist."

Mine was probably the first studious but thoroughly undisciplined mind with which he had become acquainted; one which had browsed around the edges of several fields of knowledge without suspecting the wealth of solid nutrition to be found inside. He regarded me curiously but tolerantly.

"Of course you are, if you start right and don't change your mind, and if you stay with it long enough. But first you must become a doctor of medicine, and to do so you must know your anatomy—the whole human body inside and out, every bone and muscle, nerve and bloodvessel, organ, tissue, and fluid. Each has its special place, each plays its special part in the mechanism of life. You must know where they are, what they look and feel like, what they are for, how, when and where they work. Then, if you are smart, curious, studious, and observing, you may learn how to do something about it when they get out of order."

When I began reading Gray, then a standard textbook on human anatomy, I was reminded of my earlier efforts to read Blackstone, the difference being that Gray was more difficult, but dealt with tangibles and was therefore more intelligible. A further difference lay in Dr. Moody's helpfulness.

He had graduated in medicine only three years before and rather scorned neurology as one of the soft spots in practice. Diseases of the nerves, he asserted, along with those of the skin,

entailed no great responsibilities, necessitated no broken sleep, imposed no emergency calls; furthermore, one's patients never died and none ever got well.

Aspiring to brain surgery, he seized every opportunity to continue his dissections, which he allowed me to observe, and later to participate in. On these occasions we locked ourselves in the morgue to work undisturbed night after night until our material was exhausted. With Dr. Moody's help, and Gray's descriptions, I could find and identify many important structures which otherwise would have been meaningless names.

By midwinter I had made considerable progress. I had read Gray from cover to cover and had a clear but necessarily limited understanding of the human machine's construction. I knew something of pharmacology and materia medica, and enough medical chemistry and microscopy to make simple tests. More important still, I had saved nearly two hundred and fifty dollars.

Among the catalogues I had procured and examined hopefully was one from a medical school in California which appealed to me strongly by reason of its attractive setting and low cost of tuition. From what I had seen of the state in my youth through the side doors of box-cars, and had read later, Nature had there scattered her favours prodigally, which gifts had been dressed up and marketed to immigrants from the East with amazing success. When a one-day special rate of fifteen dollars from San Antonio to San Francisco was advertised, my interest in all the other catalogues expired.

Dr. Graves was very partial to southern universities, preferably Tulane, but conceded California's charm and acknowledged somewhat grudgingly the possibility of finding good schools west and even north of Texas. It was Dr. Turner, the coldly aloof and stiffly dignified assistant superintendent, whom I had not suspected of giving me a serious thought, who decided the issue.

He recalled a former associate, a retired teacher of pathology who had gone to California. Under the benign yet stimulating influence of perpetual sunshine, golden opportunity and an atmosphere dynamically charged, his rejuvenation had been little short of miraculous. When Dr. Canney had last been heard from, he was again teaching his specialty, not in one but in two medical schools. And when Dr. Turner offered me a letter of introduction to him it was promptly accepted.

Thus armed and fortified, I set out in February in one of four

dilapidated day coaches crowded with excursionists, bringing back in my mind another west-bound journey taken at the age of twelve under the auspices of New York's Department of Charities. This was my first long-distance acquaintance with the inside of a passenger train since that memorable trip. As there had been no noticeable improvement in second-class accommodations, the thought struck me, could this by any chance be the very same car? As I recalled it the resemblance was very close; the cushions would, naturally, have grown a little more untouchable, the dirt and sour stench a little more pronounced.

Eventually we reached the Oakland pier, were herded into a dimly lit ferry, crossed the bay in a dripping fog, poured out into Market Street, that young and restless crossroads of the world where east meets east and is called west, where north joins with south to become California.

Next day I found Dr. Canney. He was tall and spare, and his piercing black eyes seemed to probe my innermost recesses, while his greying black vandyke jabbed at me accusingly with each point he made. There were, I learned, several medical schools in San Francisco. One of the best, the one in which my interest for the moment centred, was in fact expensive; the reduced tuition was for Californians only. Another school, larger and less expensive, was notoriously weak in professional standing; I judged by what he left unsaid he was not recommending it. A third, in which he taught pathology, was smaller, not exorbitant in cost, gave a very good course of study. The fourth, in which he also taught, was larger, with slightly higher tuition, gave perhaps a more thorough course. Number five was very small, rather poorly equipped, but made up for that in sincerity of purpose. Numbers six and seven were not to be considered.

Being a pathologist, Dr. Canney was interested primarily in the disease, not its cure, which he averred often proceeded at a satisfactory pace without any treatment whatever. As all the popular systems of medical practice were represented, and as he seemed to have no convictions in favour of or opposed to any of them, I wanted to know wherein they differed.

He said there were no differences in the medical sciences. All schools recognized the same authorities, taught the same subjects in the same manner, used the same textbooks. So long as they stuck to demonstrable facts they all were in perfect accord. But when they got into the realms of theory and hypothesis, especially

into the supposed action and use of drugs in treating the sick, the disagreement was bitter and deep-seated.

Followers of the allopathic system, he said, known also as old school regular medicine, outweighed the others in number, if not in zeal, and in general had the highest professional standing. They held that cures were made by giving large doses of drugs which produce effects opposite to those manifested by the disease. On the face of it this seemed reasonable enough. But homœopaths, on the contrary, swore by the law of similars, arguing hotly that like cures like, that diseases respond most favourably to minute doses of that drug which, when given to a healthy person in large doses, cause symptoms similar to those found in the disease to be treated. Dr. Canney believed that trends in modern science gave some weight to this theory.

Another school of medical thought and practice was the eclectic, a comparatively recent attempt to modernize the oldest system of them all, but still based on pragmatism. They held that medicines, preferably herbs, were to be administered if, when and where they had been found by experience to be effective. Dr. Canney deplored this very unscientific attitude on the part of a noble profession, but he confessed that if he were the patient he would probably be less interested in why and how than in whether or not what he was taking had cured others with similar complaints. He advised me to first look into the schools in which he was teaching. Although one was allopathic and the other homœopathic, they both were good and about equal in professional standing. Should I choose the first I would have the advantage of being already well grounded in its materia medica, but this would be of even greater value to me if I chose the second. He was sure either would give me a good start towards a satisfactory medical education.

Prospective medical students in the first school at which I applied were interviewed by the registrar. He was very courteous and businesslike and, after inquiring into my preparatory studies, waived the formality of an entrance examination, rather urging me to matriculate at once. Tuition fees were graduated from two hundred dollars the first year up to four hundred for the final one. He regretted that opportunities to work around the college in payment of tuition were unlikely, but arrangements were sometimes made to defer the last payment until after graduation. The next regular term would begin in September.

At the second school I talked directly to Dr. Ward, the dean, one of the most forceful and completely adequate men I have ever known. As he sat at his desk his physical presence was augmented by an aura of vitality and calm assurance, the tonic effect of which pervaded the room and imbued me, while there, with the feeling that, were I ill, anything at all from his hands would certainly cure me. Slowly my tangled thoughts took shape to form lucid statements of fact; in a half-hour's conversation he drew more from me and gave more in return than had Dean Richardson of Harvard in several hours.

He said the college year had been changed; the first semester of the next term would begin late in June, run eight months. Tuition fees were two hundred dollars a year in advance. He mentioned that Dr. Canney had spoken of me to him; he would speak to Dr. Bryant, the registrar. The college building could stand a coat of paint; the janitor was getting along in years, doubtless she would welcome a husky young assistant. He recalled a small vacant room in the basement which had been used by a former student who ran short of funds. There would be a faculty meeting next Friday at noon; I must be on hand prepared to give a good account of myself.

Promptly at noon next Friday I was on hand, but in no state of mind to give any account of myself, good or otherwise; my enthusiasm and self-confidence were rapidly oozing out with each drop of sweat which kept me mopping at my hands and brow while I waited. Clearly I must have misunderstood him, or perhaps he had misunderstood me. The idea of a total stranger finding a chance to work his way through medical school, with a living-room in the building free of cost, was fantastic. Such things happened in dreams and books, but not in life. When Dr. Canney finally called me into the library I was stewing in my own clammy juice of dejection.

A dozen or more solemn-looking men were gathered around a table arguing, of all things, issues involved in a hotly contested political campaign. They glanced up briefly, then resumed the argument, leaving me even more confused as to what was expected of me. Presently Dr. Ward cleared his throat, rapped for order, introduced me as the new student. There were some friendly nods, some conventional remarks. The professor of surgery whispered something to the professor of anatomy, who whispered something to the professor of mental and nervous diseases, who nodded to

the registrar. The political discussion was resumed, someone consulted a big gold watch, snapped its case, fidgeted uneasily. No one questioned me, no one seemed aware that this was the biggest moment of my life, the most portentous occasion I had ever faced. Their inattention calmed and half-angered me; I wanted to explain, to let them know I had two hundred dollars, that all I wanted was a chance to work my way through the first year. Once started, I could earn enough in vacations to keep going.

I had no reason to suspect that Dr. Ward was, in effect, the faculty, the rock of financial stability upon which the college rested, and that the die of my future had been cast before I entered the room. I stood beside the door watching him stroke his vandyke, his bushy brows twitching rapidly as was their habit when he was amused or pleased. At length he arose briskly, suggested the meeting adjourn if there was no further business. The faculty went its several ways, leaving the dean, registrar and Dr. Canney behind to congratulate me. I had made a good impression.

Not until then did I realize that at long last I was actually enrolled as a medical student. I could move into the basement immediately, begin attending lectures tomorrow. I could do my required work week-ends and holidays, even of a night if I was so inclined. Before I found words to express the surprise and gratitude that welled up within me, they too had gone.

WHEN I entered medical school not more than twenty per cent. of the instruction was practical, in the sense that we learned by doing. Laboratory work was all but non-existent. In physiology we watched the circulation in a frog's foot, tested the response of muscle tissue to electric stimulation, observed the heart's action in an eviscerated guinea-pig; and in chemistry we examined various secretions and excretions much as I had done at the asylum in San Antonio. But in the dissecting room we made up for any and all deficiencies elsewhere. True to Dr. Graves' prediction, we studied anatomy intensively through the first and second years until we learned it thoroughly, or were dropped from the rolls.

About eight per cent. of the teaching was by lessons assigned in textbooks or by lectures compiled from textbooks dealing with the subject; the chief difference between the two methods was that compilations seldom improved the original matter and were usually less intelligible by reason of poor delivery. Then, as now, a great number of competent doctors could save lives, but were utterly incapable of describing the procedure in simple words, clearly spoken; one greatly neglected accomplishment was, and still is, some training in public speaking.

The school was small, the faculty devoted wholeheartedly to indoctrinating the student body with the truth, as they saw it; therefore the effectiveness of lessons, lectures and demonstrations was checked every few weeks with an oral quiz, and at the end of each semester by a written examination covering everything taught to date. These were fearsome ordeals carrying a high mortality. My class, which had started bravely in October, had been pruned by the time I entered in March from a rowdy thirty-five to a somewhat chastened twenty-eight; seven members were summarily discarded after the first examination. Two others met a similar fate at the end of the year, three more at the end of the second. Two of the survivors failed the third-year examinations, and two, who passed, elected to take their credits elsewhere and be granted diplomas from larger, better-known schools.

A majority of the students had come straight from small town high-schools, and were sincere, artless and intelligent, but immature. Few if any of them seemed to be particularly gifted in those qualities which my old mentor Hippocrates attributed to the model physician, yet many who had heard the call were also chosen to enjoy successful medical careers. This was probably due to the avowed policy of the school, which was to turn out the sort of doctor an average layman would want around when he was sick.

Curiously, of the five most brilliant members of my class, one renounced practice to teach, one established himself in the metropolis and became an outstanding surgeon, one was accidentally killed some years later, one still hibernates in a mediocre political job, and one got into serious difficulties with the law by improperly dispensing narcotics.

One of the least promising succeeded eminently in city practice, and the most inveterate hell-raiser of all, the one who professed every vice and scorned all virtue but that of perseverance, located in a small country town, married a charming girl, built up a lucrative practice, and now glories in a half-dozen grandchildren.

Fortunately, I was able to catch up with my class and continue with it to the end. My little room in the basement was very comfortable. I had borrowed a cot, bedding, reading lamp and a few cooking utensils from the hospital; a big box made a serviceable table; smaller boxes served as stools. I made coffee and toasted sandwiches for breakfast, patronized the free lunch counter in a saloon across the street, dined at a students' club, all at a cost of about fifteen dollars a month. Time slipped by with astonishing speed: stoking the furnace, mowing the lawn, washing windows and painting and calcimining the second and third floors of the college, left neither days nor nights of leisure for gloomy introspection.

At the end of my sophomore year I had spent all my money and lost fifteen pounds in weight, but never had the future looked so bright. I was sitting on top of the world. Dr. Ward found me a job in a private sanatorium through vacation. Moreover, he promised to defer payment of tuition fees until I graduated, and offered to lend me twenty-five dollars a month when I ran out of funds. Furthermore, there need be no more painting around the college; the janitor was to have a full-time assistant, and I could keep my little room free of cost.

When one attained the stature of a junior, to conform with custom in the best medical-school circles he must cultivate a moustache and affect eye-glasses with a little chain attached, to hook over one ear and dangle disturbingly in his line of vision. The moustache heralded maturity and the glasses corrected astigmatism due to eyestrain, caused by long hours of study. What matter, argued the senior when selling them to me, if your sight is normal, if your eyes are strong and in no danger from overwork? They'll do them no harm, and even a junior should manage to look professional.

The logic of this struck me so forcibly I was moved to borrow a trial-case, study up on refraction and enter into competition with him, a venture which brought in some very welcome spending money.

Presumably one must learn something while in one's junior year; each succeeding examination grows increasingly tough, requires more careful preparation, is approached in greater dread and passed with deeper sighs of thankfulness. Yet I recall nothing of special interest in mine, nothing but an extension and amplification of previous work and a half-formed conviction that I already knew about all there was to learn of medicine. Twice a week we were required to attend clinics, but not for the purpose of treating the sick; that was a prerogative of seniors under a faculty member's supervision. We kept the books, wrote voluminous case-histories and records and prepared patients for examination, then stood by as critical witnesses to senior ineptitude. Doubtless this was no more glaring than was to be expected, but we were sure it was far greater than we would have exhibited had we been seniors. Never since those days of burning zeal and eager confidence have I known so much which seemed to be obvious, yet turned out to be true only with qualifications, or was questionable, or utterly wrong.

I still had hopes of becoming a neurologist, but my interest in that branch of medicine was not greatly enhanced by our aged and discursive professor. His lecture periods were invariably stretched to two interminable hours, filled completely with minute variations in the manifestations of mental and nervous diseases, compared with equally minute differences in the action of drugs to be used in treating them. Dozing comfortably while he talked, I often wondered how he had reached his eminence. What sort of genteel, lady-like neuroses did he have in mind?

What measures would he use on the violent ward in San Antonio?

I could imagine him there around midnight, silvery moonbeams filtering down through the lonely chaparral where coyotes howled their mournful dirges in her honour, and through the heavily screened window where a moon-struck maniac joined in a mad refrain which nothing less than a shot of apomorphia would still. What would he do? In theory his indicated remedy should work, but I doubted if he would have the will and patience to search for it.

Having no claim to such distinction, I nevertheless enjoyed many advantages accruing to a protégé of the dean. For a time my medical agnosticism amused and intrigued him; it was, he said, the only flaw in what seemed to be a well-proportioned adolescent mind. But at length he had come to realize that I was not wholly adolescent, and to doubt if the pernicious heresy to which I had been subjected in the asylum's pharmacy and elsewhere could be completely eradicated. He advised me not to neglect *materia medica*; the light of understanding would eventually be revealed to me, but in the meantime I should go in for surgery.

As an operating surgeon Dr. Ward stood high among his colleagues and second to none in the eyes of his rich and discriminating clientele. This is not to say he was a popular operating-room teacher of surgery; he was lacking in those qualities which enable many able men to dramatize themselves and their work at the same time. During my senior year I was privileged to see him in action at close range on scores of occasions, usually standing at his elbow and sometimes assisting him. But his absorption in what he was doing was so great he spoke no unnecessary word. Later he would discuss the case at length, perhaps compliment me on handing him the right instrument at the right instant, or on not becoming ill at the sight and smell of blood, or on having kept out of his way. He would then advise me to go home and read it up. He held that one should first learn by observing, then refresh one's memory by reading and acquire skill by doing.

One of my most vivid recollections is of a crowded amphitheatre in the old City and County Hospital. An internationally famous French surgeon, at whose feet had sat many an ambitious neophyte in the hope of improving his art, was to perform a disarticulation at the hip-joint, then a rather formidable operation. Dr. Ward had

met him in Paris and was one of a committee to arrange the demonstration; therefore had invited several of his students to attend.

The patient was wheeled into the operating room, placed on the table and put to sleep. Presently the renowned professor emerged from a dressing-room, tall, stately, bewhiskered to the eyes. He glanced at the patient, gave brief direction for ligating the iliac artery and vein preparatory to the operation; then, surveying his audience approvingly, he began a rapid-fire barrage of words which few of us could penetrate. Without pausing, he seized a long knife, tested its edge with a thumb, then in two swift slashes exposed the joint and its capsule. In a total elapsed time of forty-six seconds an assistant held aloft triumphantly the severed leg; the professor bowed stiffly to the right, to the left, to the centre, walked majestically from the room.

That not one in five of his astonished audience understood perfectly what he had said, or could follow step by step what he had done, was immaterial; that the patient expired on the table while the wound was being sutured was unimportant; we had witnessed an exhibition of manual skill such as could have been duplicated only by a meat-cutter after long experience.

Gradually, I succeeded in learning my anatomy and something of physiology, pathology, medical chemistry, the action of drugs and their use in sickness, the signs and symptoms of disease and the use of diagnostic instruments, what to do in emergencies. In my mind I could form some idea of what went on in the human body when it was invaded by infections, or exposed to harmful influences, or its mechanism improperly adjusted, or its parts suffered misuse, neglect or abuse.

Although disliking surgery, I had performed perhaps a half-dozen routine operations on cadavers under the direction of an instructor, and under Dr. Ward's vigilant eyes I had sutured a dozen or more abdominal incisions following his operations. I had set one broken leg, creditably, which was brought into the college late at night when no one else was around. In considerable embarrassment I had examined several expectant mothers, modestly draped as was then the custom, one of whom added to my confusion by grumbling when I inadvertently inserted a finger into the rectum. The four births I had attended reluctantly as a spectator had left me cold to obstetrics; I was more than ever determined to specialize in neurology. There was no reason to

suspect that this resolve would never lead to anything beyond a vague desire or that I would be compelled to operate rather extensively and to deliver nearly three thousand babies, some of them in unusual circumstances.

In my finals I passed fifth in a class of seventeen, thus losing out on one of the four internships available to four members of my class having the highest grades. I owed Dr. Ward and the medical school nearly a thousand dollars. But I was granted a perfectly valid diploma conferring on me all the rights, benefits and privileges of a Doctor of Medicine, and I had some twenty dollars in cash. Furthermore, I was engaged to the only girl in the world.

FOLLOWING the invocation on graduation night, the City Mayor had delivered an inspirational harangue in which he traced our ascent step by step to the promised land. The road to our goal had been steep, the going at times rough, but we had made it, and from on high the view was magnificent. Still dizzy with the wine of successful effort, we could not clearly discern the rich valley surrounding us, but we knew it was there; its fragrance was sensed from the description, and an occasional glint of sun on luxuriant landscape gave promise of an abundant harvest. From then onward the route would, of course, be easy, but it was not to be taken in unseemly haste, nor without due regard for the proprieties.

The dean had presented diplomas and prizes, calling our names with impressive solemnity, then individualizing us with touches of humour as he grasped our hands. Faculty and friends bestowed congratulations liberally, chatted a few minutes, then dispersed their several ways.

Later my fraternity trooped upstairs to the dissecting room for a farewell session. We had there taken our vows, from there we were departing to prove our worth. At a table bearing refreshments, an aged cadaver slumped drunkenly in a chair, an old plug hat cocked rakishly over one ear, the stem of an upset glass between his shrivelled fingers. To him and to Rosie, the skeleton dangling on a wire opposite him, one representing the beginning, the other the end of required anatomy, we drank a round of toasts. Faculty members again advised and admonished us; student members drew encouragement from the consummation of our hopes, and sly amusement from our professional air, our ill-fitting dress suits rented for the occasion, our sprouting moustaches and vandykes rapidly dampening with emotional outflow and beer—very much beer. Tonight was ours to pledge lifelong friendships, to boast and to dream. Tomorrow began another day, another life.

As a sort of consolation prize for having lost an internship by one point in my final score, I was appointed an extern in the

City and County Hospital, with duties and privileges similar to those of an intern, but without board, room or salary. A fraternity brother offered me the use of his office of an evening free of cost, thus giving me a chance to build up a practice while gaining experience in the hospital. It was a grand idea, although it failed to work out.

To my surprise, I soon learned there was no magic in my new diploma, and no appreciable public interest in me; no one whom I knew was in need of my professional services, and none but charity patients knew of me. Night after night I had sat in Dr. Brooks' office alert to the telephone, the elevator, footsteps in the hall; reading innumerable medical journals and smoking innumerable cigarettes in weary yet restive solitude.

The few dollars I had saved were quartered, then halved and still further divided until but a small fraction remained. Each evening of late I had marched, or perhaps slunk, into the hospital dining-room with the interns, ate my dinner quickly and almost by stealth in momentary fear of being thrown out. My room rent was past due; Dr. Ward had gone to Europe, Dr. Canney's accusing manner forbade any reference to my financial distress. For the first time in five years I came to hate the sight and even the thought of medicine.

I was about ready to quit and find a job when the rumour of a vacant internship in the Good Samaritan Hospital in Portland reached me: fifteen dollars a month with board, room and laundry. Without waiting for verification, I wired acceptance, borrowed twenty-five dollars, packed everything I owned into my trunk and two bags and caught that evening's train.

As I sped north through the night my mind was filled with doubts which made sleep impossible. Was the rumour true? Why and when did a vacancy exist? What had I to recommend me but a new diploma and eagerness to work? Suppose a vacancy had existed, but was now filled? Suppose it was not to be filled for a month or so? My funds were down to less than five dollars.

My spirits were still very low when the train arrived in Portland next evening. Thinking vaguely of a fifty-cent room, I followed a porter carrying my heavy bags to the street. Taking for granted what I wanted, he set them down beside a handsome hotel bus, a compliment which served somehow to stiffen my morale. I imagine I carried myself a little straighter, that my step was a little firmer as I marched up to the desk and wrote the letters **M.D.** after my

name, hoping the clerk would be suitably impressed. But he remained in complete mastery of his composure; in a quite matter-of-fact vein he suggested something with a bath, at about three dollars, which I accepted with as much nonchalance as I could muster.

An early breakfast, haircut and shine reduced my capital to where it could easily be counted in dimes, but when I telephoned the hospital the superintendent said she would see me at ten o'clock.

The large motherly woman, perfectly poised and impeccably clad in white, smiled when I entered her office, then settled back behind her desk to look me over.

"I should say you have a great deal of assurance," she observed, "rushing up here without waiting a reply to your telegram. Why all the haste?"

Her level gaze was calm and searching, but her eyes were frank and kind and invited confidence. "I was afraid your answer would not be favourable and I hoped to change it," I replied. "I had had about all the discouragement I could stand."

Again she smiled, nodding her head as though she understood. "It certainly was not favourable; we get all our interns from the medical school here in Portland." Removing her glasses, she polished them thoughtfully. "Suppose you tell me all about it—I mean, about yourself. Where are you from?"

More in appreciation of a sympathetic listener than in hope of a job, I sketched briefly my qualifications, ending by offering to do anything about the place, inside or out, salary no object. I simply had to have work, and soon.

As it turned out there was, in fact, a vacancy. One of the interns had developed a suspicious cough and was then out in eastern Oregon on leave of absence; it was possible the board would allow me to serve as a substitute pending his return. She called a nurse to show me around, to take me to lunch. That evening I moved in under a temporary appointment.

However greatly hospitals may differ in size, furnishings, rates and regulations, personnel and clientele, the difference is in degree rather than in kind. The drama of life in continuous performance on their wards and in their theatres is not played in the same key and tempo, but the directors and managers, stars, understudies and trained assistants all take their cues from the

same script, run through their lines to the same accompaniment of misfortune and suffering.

In the Good Samaritan Hospital the tempo was moderated to an unhurried orderliness and its pitch to a restful murmur. Miss Emily, the superintendent, held to the simple theory that hospitals should be operated with due regard for the comfort and welfare of patients. Therefore she ruled out everything incompatible with that objective. She tolerated no disturbing noises, no unnecessary formalities, no hard-and-fast routine and no unavoidable delay in doing what was to be done in the simplest manner and with the least commotion.

My short and precarious service as an extern in a large city hospital, where personal interest was sacrificed to speed and attentiveness waited on convenience, was disappointing. It was too mechanical and too objective. No one concerned himself greatly with the individual; we were interested in what ailed him, and the more grievous it was the more impatiently we awaited the autopsy to observe the ravages of disease and to verify or disprove the diagnosis.

The practice of medicine, as I had imagined it, agreed rather closely with what I found in this smaller, semi-private institution in which I was now an intern. Miss Emily saw to it that when her nurses were on duty they nursed, that her interns carried out the visiting staff's orders promptly and explicitly. We still were students, she reminded us. In medical school we had studied human bodies and their diseases; we must now study human lives and learn how to lighten some of their burdens.

It is said that impending death reveals things which formerly were obscure, but sickness too, if one is observing, shows us things as they are. This delicately portentous word, sickness, includes not only its generally accepted definition, but overcrowding, overwork, malnutrition, worry and an ugly host of deprivations and perversions of body and spirit all the way from a bad inheritance down to senile decay. Its protean nature is an amazing revelation to the intern. He sees everywhere about him the seeds from which it stems and the soil upon which it thrives, and he comes to marvel, not at its prevalence, but at how so many escape.

He may not be able to put a right interpretation to all that he sees, to the deadly boredom of those surfeited with too much and to the scars and fresh wounds of those suffering from too little; many of us go through life unaware of, or perhaps indifferent to,

the fact that the cause of disease is not limited to contagions and infections, and the remedy is not always medical or surgical.

"Why don't you call a doctor? A man's a fool to neglect himself like that. You may need a rest and a good stiff tonic, or maybe an operation."

But it is not often that simple.

The intern discovers that those who are very ill are apt to ask for little; that sickness dulls the edge of pain and masks the face of anxiety. He learns to almost judge the severity of illness by the demands made upon him by the patient. But he must not be misled by appearances; he is making the acquaintance of heavy responsibility, the fear of doing more harm than good, and the bitterness of a bad mistake. He is learning to cultivate a true sense of relative values and to trust his judgment, yet not to be too sure of the obvious.

All of us while we are interns want to know what we will make of our profession, but we sometimes forget to wonder what it may make of us. Have we chosen a career or a calling? Will we bear allegiance to the god of success or of service? Or shall we undertake to maintain a nice balance between the two, making the most of our opportunities and giving our best in return? We argue this question among ourselves endlessly, bringing up various examples set by members of the visiting staff.

Someone mentions Dr. Smith, who has made a career of middle-aged, emotionally starved women of wealth and leisure. His suave, softly purring bedside manner is faultless and covers a coldly acquisitive disposition, but he gives his patients what they crave, which is all many of them need.

"Good morning, Mrs. Blank. You are very much better; I can see that at a glance." He lingers over her pulse, then slides his hand down her wrist. "What a beautiful ring! I haven't seen that before, have I? But no wonder; your hands are far more attractive." When this palls, or when he finds them in a favourable state of mind, the stage is set for Act II.

"Now, dear lady, I'm not advising you; I'm just thinking out loud trying to decide what we should do. Without a doubt this is a gastric ulcer. It may improve under suitable treatment over a period of time, but, on the other hand, it may not. We must think of perforations, hæmorrhages, malignant degenerations. . . . This is not a cancer—not yet, anyway. It can now be removed safely and completely. How long should we wait? How

long is it wise to postpone a certainty in hope of a possibility?" The operation follows as a matter of course, on a privately arranged fee-splitting understanding.

We think of Dr. Brown, he of the feral eyes and heart of polished steel, whose measure of success overflows with bits of human anatomy clipped from terrified women. "An ovary a day when the lady can pay; half a doubled fee equals a whole one." As his influence is great and as he is not averse to shifting responsibility for mistakes and bad luck, we dread the first signs of complications. We stand guard over his operative cases as a miser watches his gold; any unusual rise in temperature, any increase in nausea or distension, even extreme discomfort, calls down blistering criticism of interns and nurses. He makes us mad and gives us no end of worry, but we envy his big fees and admire his consummate nerve along with his beautiful new automobile and coloured chauffeur.

And there is Jones, a personification of the traditional family doctor, smelling strongly of horses, tobacco and pungent medicines. His clothing could have been slept in, and often was, as he knew full well the number of long hours in a sleepless night, the comforting assurance with which his presence fills the sick-room. He brings this to the bedside and at the moment no one seems to notice his manners, or whether he has any. Much of his equipment for practice is carried under his hat and in an old black bag, but his knowledge is exact and rests on a solid foundation of experience and close observation supplemented with a rare gift of intuition. He watches the patient a moment, sniffs the air and says "Typhoid." It proves to be typhoid. He addresses the interns impartially as "Son," the nurses as "Miss"; we all like him immensely, yet no one envies his pattern of life or expects to conform to it.

There are many others, many fine upstanding men and doctors making the best of whatever chances they have. They plod along doggedly, or bustle in and out importantly, generous with praise, sparing of censure and always ready with a helpful suggestion. With them we come to share the deep satisfaction in checking the destructive processes of natural laws which we have not learned to elude, and in minimizing the effects of causes which we ignore or are unable to avoid. From them we also catch glimpses of crosses which we, too, must bear; the competition of medicine against ignorance, neglect, prejudice, quackery,

delusion and misunderstanding. We see ingratitude where it is least to be expected, and forgetfulness of obligations which should be lifelong, if life is worth the saving. We wonder what we will make of it, how and where we will start practising. And we sometimes wonder if we should not have prepared ourselves for some other vocation.

“**H**OW would you like to go to Alaska, to a nice little town where there is no doctor, but plenty of pay patients?” Miss Emily propounded this startling question to me one morning late in October, in the presence of a shrewd-looking little man whom she introduced as Mr. Blank. He was manager of a wholesale drug house and had just returned from Alaska, bringing with him an amazingly attractive proposition.

The only physician in one of the oldest towns in the territory, and for a distance of several hundred miles in all directions therefrom, had made a fortune and retired, leaving a hospital empty of patients and a drug store eager for prescriptions. That it was located about a thousand miles from Seattle, in a region generally looked upon as scarcely habitable, mattered little to me; here was opportunity battering at my door when I had come to fear there was no place in the world not over-supplied with doctors.

Furthermore, and this settled instantly any light doubts which may have been forming in my mind, the Government was looking for a husky young doctor who could take plenty of punishment and at the same time take care of himself; a sanitary survey of the native races of Alaska was to be made preliminary to establishing a medical service for their benefit. The appointment would come from the U.S. Bureau of Education in Washington; the job would last a year; the salary was \$150 a month, with travelling expenses. Headquarters would probably be in the midst of the largest Indian population, which, strangely enough, was the very town now so badly in need of a doctor. The prospect of a Government job with an office in such a promising locality was irresistible.

Miss Emily advised me to send an application to Washington from the hospital, which she would endorse, then leave at once, tomorrow. A chance such as this would not long go begging. To this Mr. Blank agreed; then, as an afterthought, hoped I would use lots of drugs which he would be glad to ship me, C.O.D.

In those days temperamental surgeons eased the strain on their nerves by hurling to the operating-room floor, or at a nurse, any

instrument not in perfect edge and order. These were dutifully salvaged, stored in the basement and given to impoverished interns upon leaving the hospital. Miss Emily led the way down to this treasure-room, where I selected enough surgical instruments to stock a small hospital. We packed them in a large box along with an old obstetrical bag, also stuffed until its crumbling sides must be bound with wire to keep from bursting, then filled all corners and empty spaces with surgical dressings and emergency supplies.

One important detail had been overlooked in the hurry of making ready to depart, the matter of transportation to Alaska. The fare was about sixty dollars and I was possessed of less than ten. But Miss Emily called me into her office and again came to my aid, this time with a loan. Thus the stage was set for my great adventure.

That night was one of the longest within my memory. What was I stepping into? How should I deport myself in a pioneer country? How would I make out as a general practitioner, alone and hundreds of miles from consultation? I was not interested in surgery or obstetrics and would probably have to do both—at least, until that Government job materialized. I was getting further and still further into debt; but according to Blank I would make a lot of money and would soon be able to repay my obligations. Then in a year or so I could return to my first love, neurology.

Complications began arising next day in Seattle. The Alaska boats had gone on a winter schedule, meaning one every two weeks. No provision for delay had been made in financing my trip; it would be nine days before another sailing. I could return to the hospital, to an anticlimax, or I could stick it out under penalty of travelling north in the steerage, which seemed preferable. As a result, when I finally got under way, my cash in hand had dwindled to exactly fifty-five cents.

An hour or so after leaving port Captain Jensen came down to the steerage quarters, where a lone Indian and I held forth in dreary estrangement. He stood watching me a moment, his hands thrust deeply into the pockets of his jacket, his feet braced against the ship's roll.

"So you're going inside to doctor the Indians, hunh?" he rumbled.

"Yes, sir. White people too, I hope."

"Humph. Can't amount to much, going up in the steerage. Or mebbby you're just startin' out?"

"Yes, sir. This is the beginning. But I'll be coming back first-class in a year or two."

With a grunt which might have been of doubt or possibly of contempt, he turned and waddled off; but in a few minutes a steward came down, gathered my bags and conducted me up to a first-class state room. "Captain's orders," he said in explanation, and out of my gratitude I gave him my last half-dollar as a tip.

Winter travel to the north was light; not more than twenty passengers were on board, returning from business or other affairs in the States. Next day in the smoking-room an elderly, jovial old-timer with a perverted sense of humour, spotting me as a stranger, proceeded to mingle facts and fancies relating to Alaska so recklessly as to keep me alternating between eagerness and apprehension. Never had I heard such fantastic descriptions of a country and its inhabitants, nor dreamed of such bizarre customs and living conditions as he assured me I would find. Deadwood in its palmy days was, by comparison, a comfortably quiet New England village.

He said I would enter a new world after crossing the international boundary between British Columbia and Alaska. There would be no telegraphic communications, no railroads, horses, highways or stage-coaches; no electric lights, steam heat or running water; no fresh fruits, milk, eggs or vegetables. Chief articles of diet were fish, game, sourdough hot cakes and beans, but in the larger villages there was often a limited supply of canned goods for use on Sundays and holidays. Mail would reach me twice a month if I lived on regular lines of travel, otherwise every two months, except in the far north, where it would come once a year. There were no towns to speak of in this veritable outpost of civilization, nothing but small villages and trading posts, peopled by a hardy race of hybrids descending from shipwrecked mariners and native women.

Typical Alaskan architecture was the igloo, built of blocks of ice frozen into a solid whole after pouring water over them. Entrance was through a small opening in one side, closed by a flap of deer or bear skin. He admitted that in recent years a few log-cabins had been erected in some of the larger villages. He regretted that I had not brought a supply of clothing suitable to the country, but as I would doubtless take up with a squaw in

a month or so she would attend to that; she would make me a shirt, or parka, of sea-otter fur, which slips on over the head with a hood attached, and my sealskin pants would end in a sort of boot, called mucklucks. These with a fur cap and gloves would complete my outfit.

Gold was plentiful; one could scrape away the grass or snow and find it almost anywhere. It was the only respectable medium of exchange, preferably in the form of nuggets or dust just as it came from the mines. I would need some scales to weigh out my fees, and a long leather poke in which to carry my gold; these could be bought at any trading post. There were a few hotels catering to old-timers who holed up in the villages for the winter. As a rule strangers were not welcome; their appetites were too finicky. A typical menu for regular boarders comprised one or more varieties of fish, seal blubber and, for dessert, native berries preserved in seal oil. This was sliced and served cold, comparable to ice-cream. He warned me against venturing far from my igloo of a night unless well armed. Polar bears were very plentiful.

He admitted Alaska was a pleasant place in which to live. In winter, of course, the sun never rises, but as it never sets in summer, Alaskans get their fair share of sunshine. Winter is the season for sports, chief of which is stud poker and faro; last winter five old-timers sat in one continuous game from New Year's Day until the sun came back in April. All travel in winter is by dog-team or on snowshoes; in summer one gets about on a steamship or in a canoe. I would probably make most of my calls with dogs, and he warned me they were vicious; last winter a stranger was pulled down and devoured by his dogs right in town. Stealing was practically unknown. He told of a merchant who left the country for the winter and forgot to lock his store; when he came back in the spring he found the door still unlocked, but nothing missing. Murder, however, was quite common; he reckoned there was about one killing a week where I was going; something would have to be done about that sometime. And so on throughout the trip.

At the disenchanting hour of 2 a.m., and with five cents remaining of my capital, I reached my destination. Falling snow curtained from view the magnificent setting in which the town rested, but neither snow nor darkness could hide the cold inhospitality of the wharf, the strangeness of the people. Unmindful of the hour, a small crowd had gathered to meet the ship, eager

for news which was shouted forth and back while the lines were made fast. First on board was the postmaster, mayor and hotel-keeper, a rotund, fur-clad personage with bright little eyes peering out from a tangle of frosty beard. The captain introduced me, my hand was grasped as in a vice, and I was told bluntly that another doctor had arrived the week before.

This was the final blow to my hopes and expectations, already weakened by my loquacious fellow-passenger. No use even going ashore, I decided cheerlessly; all I could do was find some means of getting back to Seattle. Never before had I felt myself in such desperate straits; never had the future seemed so dark and forbidding. I would find Captain Jensen, beg him to allow me to work my way wherever the ship was going. It mattered little to me.

"Cheer up, son; things ain't so bad." My imaginative friend was standing in the doorway. "I know that feller who beat you to it; I knew him in Sitka. He's a no-good drunken chap who got run out of the States an' can't make a livin' 'thout sellin' whisky to the Siwashes. If he's a doctor, then I'm Teddy Roosevelt. Pick up your stuff an' come on up to the hotel an' have a drink."

The narrow planked street set on piles over the water was lined on either side with low, rough-boarded or log houses, all dark and desolate. Halfway down the street a small hotel offered me the hospitality of a hot drink and an ice-cold bed in an airtight room already occupied by two sleeping men. This I gave up temporarily for the warmth and good cheer to be found downstairs.

A large room cheerfully lighted with kerosene lamps hanging from the ceiling, and heated by a red-hot stove made from an iron kerosene drum, served as post office, hotel lobby, bar-room and general business and recreational centre. In the rear numerous games held their devotees as under a spell, oblivious to everything but the elusive goddess of chance. Dealers with green shades above their eyes sat behind the tables with stacks of gold coins before them, turning the cards in calm indifference to gains or losses.

Late as was the hour, there were perhaps twenty men still interested in the turns of fortune, all more or less bearded and wearing fur caps, heavy mackinaw coats and high shoes with socks reaching to the knees. A few hard-faced women hung around the tables, mingling freely with the men, placing an occasional bet. Two men were arguing somewhat drunkenly at

the bar, another slumped behind the stove snoring peacefully. That first picture of Alaskans at leisure made an indelible impression on my mind.

Next morning the weather had cleared and grown very cold; frozen snow hissed and squeaked under every footstep as the little town bestirred itself. When I came downstairs to shiver a moment beside the still red-hot stove I found my baggage piled up against the wall. As the hotel man, mayor and postmaster asked me to have an eye-opener, which I declined with thanks, and as he made no mention of advance payment, my trunk, boxes and bags evidently implied substantial resources. A breakfast of really good coffee, delicious hot cakes, venison chops and fried potatoes seemed to improve my circumstances. The ship had sailed and would not return for five days; I was stuck and might as well make the best of it.

Almost directly across the street was the Siren that had lured me to Alaska, the drug store which, I learned, was open for business only between meal-times; the owner was also the hotel waitress. She had bought the place from my predecessor the day he left town, and was still trying to make out his cost marks and selling prices.

I was surprised when she told me she knew nothing about drugs. But when I saw what she had bought I realized that her lack of knowledge need cause her no great concern; the dusty counters and shelves contained almost every sort of merchandise but useful drugs. Bottles of various sizes, many of them without labels, filled the shelves on one wall, while opposite was a strange collection of Indian baskets, beads, toys, stale candy, soap, perfume, stationery, dog harness, snowshoes, trading goods of all descriptions. Behind a breast-high partition in the rear was a stock of domestic remedies, pills and patent medicines, liniments, plasters, powders, grouped according to the ailments they were guaranteed to cure. It was in dispensing these, chiefly in exchange for furs, that the so-called doctor had made his doubtless over-rated fortune. He had come to the country long before the gold rush as an Army Medical Corps sergeant, then upon discharge had set himself up in practice. Strangely enough, there were citizens of standing and apparent intelligence who swore by his manner of treatment.

I inquired about the hospital, and was quite willing to take

the waitress-druggist's word for it, a tumble-down cabin in use years ago during an epidemic, but long since abandoned. Its windows were gone, the floor probably covered with snow. It was not and never had been the tight little institution I had envisioned in my mind.

The druggist urged me to stay; she was sure the other doctor was no good; no one liked him; he had been drunk three times in two weeks and would last no time at all against competition. There were two or three hundred whites in the immediate vicinity and nearly a thousand Indians and mixed-bloods, many of them periodically well-to-do. They fished for the salmon canneries of a summer, in winter they hunted and trapped; it was not unusual for a family to bring in a thousand dollars' worth of furs in the spring. And they paid their bills. White man's medicine had a curious appeal to them, especially if it came in big bottles and was strong, black and bitter. But they were suspicious of doctors, probably because none had made any sincere effort to gain their confidence.

She suggested I make a door-to-door canvass of Front Street, asking everyone whether I should leave or remain, and be guided by the result. As the vote turned out more than ninety per cent. in my favour, I began that most delightfully engrossing task of tasks, that of a young doctor establishing his first office.

There was but one vacant house in a good location, a rough board and batten structure about ten by twenty feet in size with a partition dividing it into two equal parts, one room furnished with an old rusty stove, the other with a home-made table, chair and stool. I tried the stove, which smoked furiously, then threw out a generous amount of heat. Fortunately for the preservation of my enthusiasm, I did not realize that ice and snow had sealed the roof; that when they melted a large part of the resultant water would drip through.

Out of empty boxes I made shelves, arranged my instruments and supplies with the idea of showing them to good advantage. The mayor-postmaster-hotel-keeper was interested and helpful, lending me a good lamp for my surgery, another lamp and a comfortable chair for my reception room, various articles I could use. He told me later he knew by the gleam in my eyes that I meant business and he suspected I was broke. In this latter he was absolutely wrong; I still possessed the five cents with which I had landed.

On the fourth day after arriving I brushed out the last speck of dust, arranged for the last time my visible stock-in-trade, sat down in my one good chair to appraise the effect and to pronounce it good. I was ready for my first patient.

She came that afternoon, a shy little half-breed who sidled in, looked about the room curiously and at my formidable display of instruments approvingly.

"Are you the doctor?" she murmured.

"Yes, indeed. Won't you have a chair?"

I wondered what more I should say? Just how should one approach one's very first private patient? In the hospital I had taken hundreds of case-histories without the slightest agitation and with no personal interest; I had every routine question at the tip of my tongue; I could begin at either end of the body and work up or down with equal composure. But this was different; this patient belonged to me personally and exclusively; she had, in effect, placed her life in my hands. But she didn't look very sick.

She slid halfway into a chair, folded her hands demurely and again murmured, "It's my leg. It's been sore a long time, and it hurts when I stand still."

I imagine few sore legs have been examined more closely or with greater concern, that rarely has a simple varicose ulcer been treated with such respect and thoughtfulness; after alternately dabbing it with cocaine and scrubbing it with green soap, I applied an ichthyol dressing under a tight adhesive bandage. I was so completely absorbed in my work, and in explicit directions for after-care, that when she asked the amount of my fee I was momentarily taken aback.

"One dollar and sixty-five cents," I managed to reply, whereupon she counted out the exact change. How or why this odd figure occurred to me is one of the small mysteries still unsolved; but the ulcer healed, the little half-breed recommended me to her friends; at the end of my first month's practice I had made and collected nearly fifty dollars. The next month I collected more than a hundred. The practice of medicine was justifying my most sanguine expectations.

MRS. LEWIS, the little half-breed with the varicose ulcer, saw to it that I met Chiefs Shakes and Kadeshan of the Wolf and Raven clans, respectively, and later she introduced me to Klaook, the medicine man. He was a withered but alert little chap, said to be very old, with a tangle of long stringy hair and an air of chilly disdain. He spoke no English, and after a glance in my direction turned to Mrs. Lewis to say that I wasn't old enough to be much of a doctor. Fortunately for me, he fell through a broken plank in the wharf a few weeks later, cracking several ribs. As there was nothing in his armament equal to coping with this emergency, I strapped his side tightly with adhesive plaster, giving him immediate relief and gaining his gratitude, if not his professional respect. Still later, after seeing him in action, I could assure him there were no grounds for jealousy between us; our practice was based on entirely different concepts of disease and treatment.

Klaook lived alone in great mystery in a little hut at the edge of town, performing his cures while under the spell of a beneficent spirit cultivated during periods of retirement and fasting. This enabled him to perceive a soul about to leave the body, to capture and replace it, and to cast out evil spirits responsible for the mischief.

One night Mrs. Lewis sat with me in a corner of a large community house, where a woman in the last stages of tuberculosis had been moved to the centre of the floor; they had sent for Klaook, who was coming to give her a treatment. Presently, attired in a bearskin robe, a hideous mask, and but little else, he slipped in, stood at the door a moment, then stepped cat-like across to his patient and opened his medicine box. So far as I could make out, this contained a small beaded bag, a number of assorted bones, sticks, and stones, a small drum and a highly decorated rattle. Opening the bag widely that its contents be free to work their magic, he began striking the drum at regular intervals with the rattle, then in a sing-song voice exhorted the malignant spirit to depart under penalty of the most horrible

tortures his mind could invent. Dancing around the patient, breathing upon and stroking the affected part, which he seemed to know was her chest, his body grew more and still more agitated as he warmed up to his work. As the treatment progressed his voice and gestures increased in pitch and violence until he ended his conjurations in a wild frenzy which left him exhausted. The patient was not visibly benefited, but she surely had reason to be favourably impressed with the medicine man's sincerity of purpose.

When his chant, dance and rattle failed to effect a cure, or some improvement, it was because of adverse influences exerted by someone also having spiritual connections, a sort of malicious animal magnetism bewitching the patient. Klaoook was often able to detect the individual responsible for this interference, usually a personal enemy of the family or clan, and of no great importance. Formerly, the witch was put to torture until death ended his sufferings or the patient recovered. Mrs. Lewis said no witches had been killed outright within her memory; they were merely ostracized by family and clan and left to freeze or die of neglect or starvation.

My application to the Bureau of Education had been acknowledged and accepted; the appointment with full instructions would be coming along soon, and it was hoped I would do a good job. It was evident that one must win the natives' confidence, awaken their interest, and learn something of their history and background, their temperamental peculiarities, physical characteristics and economic problems; also how they were reacting to changing circumstances brought about by thousands of gold-seekers stampeding into their country. I began cultivating them diligently, talking through interpreters to scores of old men and women, making physical examinations, reading everything I could find dealing with Alaska and its native races.

The little town in which I had established myself was a populous Indian village long before the first white settlers ventured into the country. Before the gold-rush the proportion of Indians to whites had been about ten to one, but following that historic event in which prospectors and camp-followers swarmed into the Klondike and surrounding country, perhaps a hundred discouraged Argonauts had settled in the town, bringing the proportion of Indians down to three or four to one.

There were two large trading posts which bought furs and

sold all sorts of staple commodities at about 100 per cent. above Seattle prices, two churches with relatively few parishioners, a school for white and better-class half-breed children, several small shops, one overcrowded hotel, five busy saloons, and a dance-hall in which the lady entertainers were squaws. Three restaurants specialized in wild duck, moose, and venison steaks, and native blueberry pie. There were also a salmon cannery and a sawmill, the usual run of small town craftsmen, labourers, entrepreneurs and gentlemen of leisure with no visible means of support. Perhaps a score of fishermen and prospectors hibernated in cabins on the beach during the winter months, and a number of trappers through the summer.

The town was proud of all but two of its half-hundred white women—namely, old Silver Tip and Passionate Annie. This is not to say the townswomen enjoyed perfect social equality; lines were drawn rather tightly, and one's status was determined largely by when and why she came to the territory. This seemed to be of even greater importance than what she had done before and after coming. Two capable and emphatic arbiters who had arrived with husbands before the gold-rush settled amicably all questions of doubt in such matters but one, which concerned Dutch Marie. In point of residence she was the oldest old-timer of them all, and to just what extent her pioneering spirit and well-known generosity were beclouded by her equally well-known profession, before she married old Joe Baker, was a nice point which at times threatened to wreck the whole social structure.

Another aggravating problem had to do with racial inter-marriage. Dozens of squaw-men whose domestic arrangements were made privately, often unofficially and more or less temporarily, occupied a special compartment in the social edifice, along with that of their numerous offspring. One highly respected and substantial citizen who had taken a native wife in the early days when white women were scarce, as had most of the unattached pioneers, was an especially annoying thorn in the flesh. When business was dull he was the town's banker, and therefore could not with impunity be classed a squaw-man. Yet there was his family. The situation adjusted itself each winter when his children were away at school and his wife was in unobtrusive retirement, and when nearly everyone was operating on a credit basis. But later, when the girls were home and cash was plentiful, the fires were again lighted, to burn fitfully through

the summer. So far as I know, they were never permanently extinguished.

Aided by the druggist-waitress I had listed all the leading personages in town, white and Indian, with brief items for their easy identification. This was committed to memory, thus enabling me to greet them by name, correctly pronounced, and often to add some small personality which pleased them enormously.

Mending old Klaoook's broken ribs gave me a good start towards winning the Indians' confidence. When all precedent was broken by asking no fees from them in advance they were almost too friendly, coming to me with all sorts of complaints and, probably for the first time to any white doctor, with their obstetrical difficulties. These differed in no respect from those of young and healthy white women leading active lives in which there was no element of fear or dread; primipara excepted, childbirth rarely lasted longer than an hour or two, unless complicated by a deformed pelvis, an overgrown baby or its faulty position. Dreaded eclampsia was unknown; infections and hæmorrhages were rare. But retained and adherent placentæ were rather common, possibly due to syphilis. In these cases the Indian medicine man's miracles often were spectacular; after waiting several days, the adherent placenta usually began sloughing, needing only the strong expulsive efforts incited by his incantations.

In medical school we were taught next to nothing about abnormal childbirth, it being assumed, evidently, that when in trouble we would call in a specialist. But in Alaska there were no specialists; therefore I followed the only safe and sane course I knew, which was the test of time; if satisfactory progress was not made on schedule, I looked for the cause and tried to remedy it myself. It was a hard but invaluable school of experience in which one must study, observe, remember, use his judgment and stand or fall by the outcome, with no shifting of responsibility. I could find some encouragement in realizing that however little of skill and knowledge I had to offer, it was more than had been given them before.

That the Indians were not lacking in appreciation was shown in the way all doctors prize most dearly, by paying for services in gratitude, money, or in kind, or by recommendations to friends. As a rule they werè honest, and not so much forgetful of obliga-

tions as neglectful in discharging them; to an Indian the element of time is of no importance. Upon the man as head of the family fell the duty of providing ways and means, which were utilized by the woman. She made the purchases and paid the bills if and as the spirit moved her, or when demands were insistent; from somewhere within the folds of her ample skirts she would haul forth a brightly coloured kerchief or an old dirty rag, wrapped around one or more pieces of gold. I have had dozens of Indians meet me years after whatever services I had rendered them were forgotten, along with the bill. Grinning, they would say, "You see, Doctor, I no forget," then pay my long overdue fee, or after paying a sizable amount, offer me fish, baskets, furs, bracelets, and even a marriageable daughter as tokens of gratitude.

Formerly, an Indian's wealth was measured by the number of his canoes and weapons, the amount of his hunting and fishing gear, the size of his house and totem pole, and the number of his slaves. Their first metal tokens of wealth were plates of copper carved with totemic designs, called *tows*. They claim the original pieces from which smaller ones were cut were found nailed to trees, fastened there by early English and Russian explorers to mark their landings. A *tow* was worth 750 Hudson Bay blankets when these became available, valued at \$1.50 each. Blankets were accepted among the Indians in payment for all manner of services, and as a solace to wounds of pride, honour, or affection, but in their dealings with the whites all values were counted in terms of gold and silver.

Among the older Indians, who conformed more or less closely to old customs, blankets still constituted a form of wealth accumulated chiefly to be given away. In one old house I was shown sixteen large camphor-wood chests, each packed tightly with new, bright red blankets which were to be distributed at Christmas in a "potlatch." With appropriate modifications, this now all but obsolete custom could be advantageously revived as an effective means of getting rid of superfluous property and, if generally adopted, of equalizing wealth. Invitations were sent far and wide to relatives, friends, and members of the clan; the affair often drew hundreds of guests and lasted several days. After feasting until all the food was consumed, and dancing until a satisfactory state of exhaustion was attained, the potlatch ended by the host giving away all or most of his effects, and in former times killing or liberating a few slaves. Among the Indians its chief purpose

was to discourage hoarding, but they were not insensible to its consequent prestige. Rank and station were determined largely by the state of one's fortune, which they could only determine with certainty by the possessions one gave away.

While they differ in language and general appearance, the natives of Alaska are all more or less closely related and have much in common. Unlike the plains Indians, they are of short stature, less graceful carriage and more deliberate manner, having light brown skins, flat Oriental features, slanting brown eyes and stringy black hair. Their voices are deep, guttural and melodious; when among friends they laugh easily and talk incessantly. In disposition they are friendly and sociable, but independent, aggressive, cunning, suspicious of strangers, quick to anger and pitiless in retaliation.

Since time immemorable they have been divided into two great families, or clans, the Eagles and Ravens, traditionally descending from an eagle and a raven, respectively. Marriage within the clan was forbidden to prevent inbreeding; therefore the Eagles and Ravens were customarily at war, chiefly for the purpose of securing wives. Raids on an enemy village were undertaken: after a proper show of resistance all the marriageable young women were captured, and the wedding ceremony was concluded when the bride was carried, or dragged, to her new home and tossed into a corner of the hut. Presently the outraged village would organize a revenging raid and, if possible, collect something more than *quid pro quo*.

Children belonged to the mother and her clan. Their first few months were spent in a deerskin sling hanging on the mother's back; later they were bound in a bark cradle lined with moss or fur and deposited safely above the reach of wild animals. They were nursed until able to chew the regular food; when they could walk they were dressed in a single shirt. In former times clothing was made of skins fashioned into loose-fitting shirts, leggings and boots; by the time I reached the territory these fur garments were rare. Fish and game comprised the chief diet, caught in reed nets and deadfalls when not killed with bow and arrow, spear or harpoon. Much of the food was consumed raw, dried or smoked, but on special occasions it was boiled with various edible roots, herbs and bulbs in large watertight baskets into which hot stones were dropped.

Tobacco was introduced by the Russians, but was scarce and

prized highly. Since it was too precious to be dissipated at one sitting, it was first chewed by the men, then turned over to the women, who, by drying and pulverizing the quid and mixing it with willow bark, prepared it for smoking.

Slavery was a well-established custom among the Alaska Indians until long after the country passed from the Russians' hands; as a matter of fact I ran across many slaves on my visits to isolated regions. In every town and village were a few old men and women known as slaves, but no longer held in servitude. They enjoyed no civil rights and formed the lowest social class, some of the stigma clinging to their descendants to the third generation. Prisoners of war and victims of raids when not killed outright were held as slaves, with some chance of being eventually freed; to liberate or sacrifice a slave upon some suitable occasion was a gesture of equal magnificence.

Excepting medicine men, whose remains were deposited in an elevated wooden box, and slaves, whose bodies were thrown unceremoniously into the sea, the dead were cremated. A funeral pyre was made ready at some convenient place near the village where fuel was plentiful; invited guests carried out and deposited the remains; the fire was lighted during a special chant directed to the spirits of the clan. No active part was taken by the bereaved family at this time, they being completely occupied in mourning. Slashing the face, beating the head and thrusting it, gingerly, into the flames to burn the hair, were considered proper marks of respect to the departed. When the cremation was accomplished; guests gathered around the sorrowing family's camp-fire to chant the funeral dirges and to cry and howl intermittently over a period of days depending on the family's prominence. It was during this time of mourning that slaves were killed or freed if the dead were held worthy of the sacrifice. On the last day relatives and mourners washed their blackened faces, applied an abundance of paint, and forgot their grief in feasting and dancing.

To me their dances were especially interesting, being pantomimic representations of individual or clan achievements. Spectators were arranged against the walls, leaving the centre of the room free for the actors. Dressed in as much tribal regalia as they could muster, they marched in; the women began singing in a shrill monotone, dancers gathered in a circle, expressing the theme with sinuous motions of the hands and arms and distortions of the face and body emphasized with hoarse grunts and rhythmic

stamping. The music was a repetition of some pertinent phrase, or calls of animals synchronized with wooden drums and rattles made of distended seal bladders containing pebbles.

Before Thanksgiving I knew everyone in town, and thanks to my drunken colleague was known by everyone as "That young Siwash doctor." The epithet was neither embarrassing nor painful; I was learning to practise medicine and my commission from the Government was on the way.

ALAKSHA was a mythical Great Country, inhabited by fierce barbarians upon whom no white man had ever gazed, when Michael Gvosdev, a Siberian explorer venturing eastward beyond the Diomed Islands in August, 1734, anchored in the lee of what he thought was another island. A half-century later Captain Cook proved this island to be the mainland of North America and renamed it Alaska.

Gvosdev's report of new lands and more fur-clad natives to be plundered appealed to the Russians, who set about preparing an expedition of discovery and exploitation. Colonists were sent eastward to establish a base and port at Okhotsk; another port was located six hundred miles farther east in Kamchatka. Supplies were hauled from Russia through Siberia to these bases, where two ships were built, outfitted, and manned for what turned out to be one of the most harrowing and dramatic voyages of discovery ever undertaken.

After seven years' preparation the expedition set sail from Avacha Bay on June 4th, 1741, with Vitus Bering in command of the eighty-foot *St. Peter*, and Alexis Chirikov commanding the eighty-foot *St. Paul*, each ship carrying seventy-six men, two landing boats, and sufficient supplies to last four months. No ocean could have been more pacific, no winds more favouring; overcrowding excepted, no voyage of discovery could have begun more auspiciously nor continued for three weeks more uneventfully. But when they ran into heavy fogs hanging over the still undiscovered Aleutian Islands a few miles to the north they became separated, never to be reunited.

Bering held the *St. Peter* on her eastward course; on July 16th he first beheld a range of snowy mountains surrounding a splendid peak which he named St. Elias. A few days later a landing was made on Kayak Island, where the water-casks were filled, and smouldering fires beside abandoned huts proved the country to be inhabited. Although the weather was still mild, Bering and about a third of his men were ill with scurvy. His voyage had been successful: he had discovered a magnificently

rugged land which must be a part of North America. Chirikov and the *St. Paul* had probably turned back, therefore he decided to return to Kamchatka.

As everyone familiar with the country knows, the weather in that part of Alaska is treacherous; within a week a terrific gale swept up from the south-east, making it impossible to hold the ship on her course. For twenty-six days the vessel was buffeted about by the storm, half the crew weakened by disease; three of them were dead. Bering himself was scarcely able to leave his berth.

On August 29th a group of islands was sighted; a lull in the storm made a landing possible. The dead were buried; a week was spent in recuperation. Bering had his first, and last, view of the native inhabitants of the country he had discovered. Through a Siberian interpreter he learned they had never before seen or heard of a ship, or of bearded men with white skins, or any of the accoutrements of European civilization.

Merciless winter was now riding the North Pacific winds. Upon leaving these islands Bering's return was a continuous battle against furious storms, driving rains, sleet, snow, hail and fog; the *St. Peter* was in constant danger of being swamped, or wrecked on unknown and unmarked rocks. On September 30th a particularly violent gale broke upon the stricken vessel with the fury of a hurricane, carrying away most of her rigging. Conditions on board were described as "indescribable." Food was running low; everyone on board had scurvy; twelve more men had died, and many were suffering injuries caused by being thrown from their bunks, leaving only eight still able to stand watch. The hatches were battened down; for sixteen days the little ship was left to the mercy of God and the elements.

All through the month of October the *St. Peter* fought her way to the westward under bare masts, beset by adverse winds and tides, fogs, floating ice and hidden rocks. She had sighted many islands, but dared not attempt a landing; twice she had been blown by gales into Bering Sea through channels between the Aleutian Islands, which stretch like giant stepping stones nearly a thousand miles from America towards Asia. When the storm abated she found herself, more by accident than design, near the Commander Islands, upon one of which a succeeding storm wrecked her on November 4th.

Bering was taken ashore on November 8th and died a month

later, his only monument being the island which bears his name. Of the seventy-six men leaving Avacha Bay on the *St. Peter* in June, forty-four reached Bering Island, and of these only eight were able to take part in erecting a shelter. Huts were built of wreckage, driftwood and pieces of sail; through the winter the men subsisted largely on seal and foxes, so plentiful they were killed with clubs. In the spring the survivors, then numbering thirty-one, constructed a small boat from the wreckage, in which they reached Avacha Bay the following August.

Chirikov and the *St. Paul* fared better than did Bering and the *St. Peter*, but the voyage cost him nearly half his men. Upon being separated, he cruised around several days looking for Bering, then held his ship closely on the course, reaching the coast of south-eastern Alaska on July 15th, one day before Bering made his landfall farther north. Finding no safe anchorage in the vicinity, Chirikov continued up the coast, keeping a sharp lookout for the *St. Peter*. Two days later, having reached the entrance to what appeared to be a deep, narrow bay, he determined to send a lifeboat ashore for fresh water—a decision which gave rise to one of the strangest episodes in American exploration and to an insoluble mystery.

The weather was fair; not more than two hours of darkness separated the long summer days. As no fires, boats, huts or other indications of the country being inhabited had been seen, there seemed to be no cause for alarm. He sailed the *St. Paul* to within half a mile of the beach, and sent an officer with ten armed men ashore with written orders to land if possible and start a fire immediately that he might see its smoke, fill the water casks, look about for signs of natives, and return without delay. The men disappeared around a point inside the bay's entrance; the ship moved out into deeper water to await their return.

There was no smoke, no gunfire, no suspicious sound; nothing but a deep, ominous silence pervaded the entire region. For five interminable days Chirikov cruised forth and back across the bay's entrance, watching for his men's reappearance, not daring to anchor among the rocks close in and finding the water offshore too deep for safe anchorage. On the sixth day he saw a fire near where the men had presumably landed, but a gun, fired at regular intervals, brought no response; no living thing but gulls was seen or heard on the beach.

Next day Chirikov sent four more armed men ashore in his

remaining lifeboat, with orders to signal immediately on landing, find the other party and bring them back at once. In considerable apprehension he watched this boat disappear around the point, then waited for the signal which never came. The weather was still fair. Next morning two large canoes each holding several men rounded the point, paddled to within half a mile of the ship, waved, and returned from whence they came. The *St. Paul* was unable to follow them into the bay, and had no boats with which to land had it done so. For a total of ten days after the first boat had gone around the point Chirikov cruised before the bay's entrance, but nothing was heard from the landing parties.

The fate of these fifteen men, the first Europeans to land on the coast of Alaska, has never been determined. They and every scrap of their belongings disappeared inside the entrance to what is now known as Lizianski Straits as completely as if dissolved in its turbulent waters. The Russian Government sought news of them for nearly a century without finding a trace; natives of the vicinity have no traditions concerning them. It seems unlikely that fifteen armed men could have been slaughtered with spears and arrows without having fired a shot in defence, and some traces of their influence on the native inhabitants should have been found by subsequent explorers had they deserted the ship.

With fifteen of his best men lost mysteriously, all the others ill with scurvy, his fresh water more than half gone, Chirikov continued the voyage, hoping against hope to come up with Bering. Fortunately, he missed some of the fiercest storms. When he reached Avacha Bay more than half his crew was still alive, and on his return he had discovered the Aleutians, the richest fur-bearing islands and waterways in the world. Curving westward from America to within a few hundred miles of Siberia, their wealth in seal and sea otter led the Imperial Russian Government to claim and colonize them along with the mainland from which they extended.

For a hundred and twenty-five years Russia held and apparently looked upon her discoveries in the New World as an inexhaustible, self-perpetuating fur farm. No one knew or was interested in learning what lay beyond the wall of mountains and glaciers guarding the coast. Alexander Baranof's headquarters at Sitka was sufficient unto its needs; under the force of his indomitable will it became the metropolis of western North America. But however prolific the seal and shy the sea otter,

they were unable to survive an annual slaughter running into hundreds of thousands. When they had been all but exterminated, Russia's entire colonial holdings in America were sold to the United States for a sum amounting to less than two cents an acre.

Bitter political wrangling before and following the purchase had advertised Alaska as utterly worthless; for thirty years it remained the most maligned, neglected and misgoverned possession of U.S.A. Sitka's industries, famed on both shores of the Pacific Ocean, ceased to exist; the busy little town reverted to a sprawling, decadent village of resentful Indians and mixed bloods, stranded Aleut fur-hunters, renegade Russians, deserters, miscellaneous adventurers. A few white traders established themselves at advantageous points along the coast; a few roving trappers preyed on the remaining fur-bearers; a few adventurous prospectors explored the rivers and creeks in a search for gold.

Excepting numerous missionaries and a thin scattering of Government officials, the inhabitants lived in great simplicity and to a large extent off the country. There was practically no overhead; a log cabin could be thrown together in a week or so, chinked with moss and heated by a fireplace or an improvised stove. Food and fuel were at hand everywhere, free for the taking; at a trading post one could always exchange a bundle of pelts for necessities not otherwise obtainable. Every man could pursue his aspirations after his own fashion; the recluse could live alone with none to question his motives, while he who pined for a touch of femininity found it in the native women. They made uncomplaining housekeepers for those who could stand their style of housekeeping.

Burdened neither with riches nor poverty, these hyperborean pioneers cherished no compelling desires but to maintain a comfortable existence with a minimum of effort while enjoying a full belly, a good digestion and vast independence. And there was the ever-present hope, not to say possibility, of something turning up.

What did turn up exceeded their wildest expectations. While a prospector and his Indian wife were fishing in a small branch of the Yukon River they found gold in unbelievable quantities; within a week they washed out several pounds of the precious metal. Remote, unknown and difficult to reach as was this region, the news spread quickly; soon all the prospectors within hundreds

of miles were gathering around what proved to be one of the greatest gold discoveries ever made. The richest fields in California had yielded a dollar or so to the pan, yet in the far north was gravel giving up four or five hundred times that amount, fifteen to twenty thousand dollars to the cubic yard.

Next summer there arrived in San Francisco a small ship bearing as motley a crowd as ever swarmed the decks of a buccaneer and as great a treasure as ever lay hidden in a Spanish galleon's hold. Its human freight, numbering twenty-odd men, were ragged, weather-beaten and obviously strange to cities, but the triumph of great achievement was in their eyes: they possessed more than a million dollars in virgin gold.

The dramatic arrival of these forgotten men fairly bursting with tales of huge nuggets lying in the grass roots, tales which lost nothing but verity by repetition, inflamed the imagination of thousands of unsettled men—and women, too. Not half of them were physically or temperamentally fitted to undertake such a hazardous journey; not half of those who started out ever reached the goldfields, and of those not half found anything at the grass roots but rocks and frozen ground. Many turned back, others continued the search in untried country, while others settled down to more commonplace pursuits in the mining camps. By the time I reached Alaska the frontiers were pushing still farther into the unknown; many an old-timer was already grumbling about overcrowding, newfangled notions, rules and regulations, and recalling the good old days when a man could find a cheap squaw to keep his home fires burning.

IN the early nineteen hundreds the only law in Alaska applicable to the healing art, enacted for the territory by an indifferent Congress, but not even indifferently enforced, provided that to procure a licence to treat the sick one must possess a diploma from a medical school and pay a five-dollar recording fee. No one bothered to inquire whether the diploma was from a reputable institution, or whether it had been earned, bought, stolen, or, in fact, whether or not it was a medical diploma. I ran across one undaunted practitioner whose sole credential upon which he based his professional claims was an imposing-looking certificate of membership in a lodge. As a result medicine in Alaska was represented by a variety of talent, some of which was disreputable and more of it decidedly questionable.

A small hospital had been established in each of the seven largest centres of population, located from two to five hundred miles apart and boasting, optimistically, of from two to three thousand inhabitants each. About twenty doctors were practising in the larger communities, and perhaps a half-dozen medical missionaries were scattered throughout the territory. But scores of smaller towns containing up to a thousand people had no medical service of any kind. It was for the purpose of visiting and inspecting these isolated settlements, relieving such illness as I found and recommending methods designed to improve the general state of health, that my commission was issued by the Bureau of Education.

My equipment was a regulation U.S. Army medical chest supplementing another chest of emergency supplies, a folding cot, blankets, extra clothing, a modicum of medical knowledge and a determination to make good. The region to be inspected extended from the southern boundary of Alaska to the farthest Aleutian Island; transportation included anything available, from regular passenger steamships and revenue cutters down to native canoes. More than a hundred villages were visited; more than five thousand natives were given physical examinations, or treatment or both.

The routine procedure upon arriving at a village having a Government school was to establish myself there and engage the services of an interpreter. We then called on the chiefs and sub-chiefs, to whom I told the purpose of my visit, which was to determine the approximate birth and death rates, the presence of infectious and contagious diseases, inspect houses and living conditions, and give such medical aid as my limited supplies afforded. The chiefs were asked to call a public meeting at which I would deliver a special message from the Government outlining its intentions.

The chiefs were always interested and co-operative to the extent of calling the meeting, which in the beginning followed a pattern laid down by previous visitors with a Message and invariably got out of hand. The local missionary, whom custom decreed should preside at all public affairs, always began with a long, comprehensive prayer in which he usually got in some good stuff for himself and his labours among the heathen, the teacher and her trials, the sacrifices made and hardships suffered in keeping the torch of enlightenment shining upon benighted lives. This was followed by a hymn, in which everyone joined with considerably more enthusiasm than harmony. It was now my turn to put over that special message. But there were so many urgent school and church matters to be talked over, so many instances of ingratitude and downright perversity to be chided, that to dwell upon such trivia as personal hygiene and sanitation seemed superfluous, if not out of place. The minister had insisted that sin, which covered about everything the natives were accustomed to doing, was at the bottom of all their troubles and must be stamped out before anything could be done to improve their health. It was assumed that I would back him up in this.

At the end of this preamble the natives were asked to speak for themselves, and they often did so with surprising candour. So long as they confined their remarks to testimonials of faith and gratitude for what had been done for them, the floor was theirs. But when some faithless and unappreciative savage began comparing what the white man's civilization had promised him with the material gains he had actually received, the meeting was dismissed.

From the first Russian orthodox priest down to the latest apostle of true religion, the Indians had listened more or less respectfully to word-pictures of a better life, once they gave up their heathenish

ways, but thus far about all they had received were glowing descriptions and promises. It was hoped that my talks would be more productive of improvement than were those of my predecessors; but I had more faith in my medicine chest, which contained something tangible they wanted and could understand. Grinning and chattering, they crowded around my improvised dispensary, eager to sample a Government doctor's medicine.

"Are you sick?"

"Uh hunh."

"What kind of sickness?"

"Noomatism." "Belly sick." "Too much I cough."

They had a general idea of what was wrong, or at least they knew where it hurt, which was all a Government doctor was supposed to know to effect a cure. To clarify any doubts, the older Indians would place my hand over the painful area and hold it there a moment, looking anxiously into my face to catch the first ray of understanding. When I applied a stethoscope to a chest in making an examination it intrigued them more than anything I could say. They wanted it placed over all aches and pains wherever located, and were satisfied, for the moment, when I assured them I could hear nothing alarming.

Fortunately, many of their ailments were obvious even to my inexperienced eyes. As a matter of fact, aside from devastating epidemics of measles, whooping cough and smallpox, ever-present tuberculosis, syphilis, trachoma and parasitic skin diseases, the Indians were remarkably healthy. Appendicitis, nephritis, cancer, typhoid fever, coronary disease and allergic disturbances were unknown, and pneumonia, diphtheria, scarlet fever and severe infections were extremely rare before the gold rush in 1898.

It was my belief that isolation and rigorous climatic conditions had retarded infiltration into Alaska of new infectious and contagious diseases, thus enabling the natives to adjust themselves to changes as they appeared and build up a high degree of resistance to endemic disorders. But with the discovery of gold thousands of prospectors swarmed into the country, bringing with them new dangers against which the natives had no protection. An old chief simplified the same general idea when he attributed his people's essential healthfulness to a tea made from roots of *Fatsia horrida*, commonly known as Devil's Club. From time immemorial, he said, the Indians had drunk freely of this medicine—in the spring to thin the blood and in the fall to thicken it. The

present generation, having been weaned away from this and other age-old customs and practices, was not so healthy.

More than thirty years later an article in the *Canadian Medical Journal* stated that Devil's Club had been found to possess valuable medicinal properties, somewhat similar to those of insulin.

During the process of civilization the Indians had found a modern medicine producing quicker and more decidedly perceptible effects, called "gin-gin." The alcoholic content of this fiery potion, officially labelled "Essence of Jamaica Ginger," was sufficient to divert one's attention from any ordinary pain, while the ginger served to intensify and prolong the diversion; therefore it was in great demand. Merchants possessed of a conscience refused to sell more than one small bottle to an Indian, and then only upon some conscience-easing evidence of its need. But many a self-styled doctor bought it in five-gross lots to dispense without moral or legal restrictions. Explained one of them to me in justification:

"Now listen, Doc, this is damn good medicine. These Siwashes ain't never sick enough to have a reg'lar doctor, but most of 'em are sickly an' this here gin-gin hits the spot. Why, they ain't no kind of bug can stand a good stiff jolt of it on an empty stummick."

In localities where gin-gin was not for sale, or when the occasion called for something more comprehensive than an eye-opener or a bedtime nip, a favourite alternative was "hootch-eneo." This most unpalatable concoction was brewed in five-gallon kerosene cans from a mixture of molasses and flour, or rice, potatoes, berries, anything that would ferment. After allowing it to stand several days in a warm place, the mess was consumed, often on a grand scale and sometimes with disastrous results.

Travelling *de luxe* on passenger steamers and revenue cutters was a pleasant way to enjoy Alaska's magnificent scenery and appreciate its vast extent, but it was no way to learn what I wanted to know about the natives. On my personally conducted tours of the villages I saw only what my escorts wanted me to see, met only those with whom they wanted me to talk, and learned only what they themselves had known for years. My notes from which reports to the Bureau were made showed the circumstances under which the natives lived, the chief causes of death, the number in each village afflicted with various diseases, and the kind and amount of services I had rendered. This was chiefly medical, but often included more than pills and potions. I pulled

hundreds of teeth, dressed dozens of wounds, incised numerous abscesses, and delivered several babies, one quite unexpectedly in a canoe several miles from shore and another under a tree on the beach.

What my notes failed to show, but what was becoming increasingly clear to me, was the futility of public meetings and talks on health and sanitation under the auspices of teachers and ministers who themselves seldom practised intelligently what I was attempting to teach. At least eighty per cent. of all educational effort was directed towards saving the natives' souls, while their bodies remained racked with disease, most of which was curable. But not in a day. Therefore occasional medical service lasting a few hours, however skilfully rendered, could do more harm in the end than good; each unsuccessful attempt at treatment would tend to lessen confidence in relief measures, concerning the inauguration of which I was scouting the territory.

I ran across only five teachers who possessed any accurate knowledge of public health work, medicine, or even nursing, but they, in my opinion, pointed to a possible remedy. All teachers in small villages should be nurses, with teaching an avocation. In larger villages and towns both teachers and nurses should be employed, with one or more doctors directing and checking their work. This recommendation was eventually accepted and acted upon, with improved results.

Kowkan was an old settlement of three or four hundred natives, located a few yards above a sandy beach at the head of a little cove about two hundred miles distant from my headquarters. On no regular line of travel and not often visited by strangers, it was reputed to be a typical Indian village, inhabited by typical Indians unspoilt by association with the sort of whites usually consorting with natives. On its way to Seattle for repairs, a revenue cutter had taken me out to Kowkan, where I planned to stay several days, then catch a fishing boat to another village in the vicinity.

The crisp morning air was heavy with the perfume of burning cedar, rising from scores of houses, as we rounded the point and drifted slowly alongside a log float, leading out from the beach to deep water. Canoes, dories, the missionary's gasoline launch, and several fishing boats rolled and tossed gently in the cutter's swell, while others were drawn up before the houses where a scattering of Indians tinkered with their gear, or stood idly

watching sailors unload my baggage and carry it to the Government school; strangers were not often brought to Kowkan on revenue cutters which then departed, leaving the visitor to his own devices.

The village certainly had an appearance of great age and timeless neglect, and an atmosphere of indifference to a changing world hung over it heavily; even the gulls and ravens fraternizing on the beach picked listlessly at morsels of offal washed up on the sand, and uncounted dogs scratched their mangy sides contentedly. Two great community houses, each thirty or forty feet square, faced the beach, side by side, behind their grotesque totem poles, each house the habitation of a chief, his family, and visiting members of his clan. Crowded irregularly along narrow paths leading from the chiefs' houses were those of sub-chiefs and heads of families, diminishing in size to correspond with the dwellers' status until at either end of the village were the wretched huts of slaves and descendants of slaves, the lowest social order. The corner posts of all the very old community houses, it was said, rested on the shoulders of slaves, buried alive and crushed as the heavy timbers were lowered into position.

The appearance of a stranger was always a big event in the dreary routine of a Government school; but this teacher, a spinsterish woman with tired eyes and an air of profound weariness, said my arrival in Kowkan that morning was nothing less than a heaven-sent blessing. She declared she was on the verge of closing the school; half the children had sores all over their hands and faces which she was sure they caught from mangy dogs. She had repeatedly asked the chiefs to have these creatures put out of their misery, but nothing had been done about it, and the lard and sulphur she rubbed into the youngsters every morning was licked off greedily each night by the dogs. Determined to do something about it herself, she bought a small rifle, but her aim was not equal to her intentions: no casualties had resulted. Finally, in desperation, she sent for some "Rough on Rats" and was going to distribute it through the village that very night.

Investigation showed the disease to be impetigo, thus exonerating the dogs, but its prevalence in the school gave me an idea: here was a chance to do some really effective work in public sanitation. I could easily prove to the Indians' satisfaction that a relationship existed between mangy dogs and mangy children, then follow with a demonstration of getting rid of the cause. With

my interpreter I called on each chief, inviting him and his friends to the school that afternoon; I had a message from the Government of great importance to the people of Kowkan.

It had been reported, I told them, that the children were suffering a very serious disease of the skin which might easily spread to the eyes and blind them. My investigations showed this to be true. It was useless to cure the children and have them continuously reinfected; therefore all the mangy dogs must be killed. This I intended doing myself and would begin tomorrow morning, and I expected the chiefs, who naturally were interested in their people's welfare, to make sure no sick dogs were allowed to escape.

One chief argued rather shrewdly that a Government doctor should be able to cure the dogs, thus saving their lives as well as the children's eyes, but they finally agreed to co-operate to the extent requested.

Perhaps a hundred curious Indians were lounging before the houses next morning when I started out armed with the teacher's rifle. As none of them looked friendly, I judged my announcement had not been well thought of, and as relatively few dogs were to be seen it was evident that the chiefs' co-operation was not very energetic. I had made only one kill when a determined-looking Indian sauntered down the beach toward me, leading a small, very mangy dog. When he was within a few paces he shortened his leash until the creature was almost at his feet, then stood gazing around and over my head waiting to see what would happen. For a moment I wondered if I should let him get away with it. Clearly, it was his intention to show me up before the village. I raised the rifle with more deliberation than the occasion warranted, hoping the man would step aside, but when he held his ground with something of a sneer on his lips, I drilled the dog squarely between the eyes.

The Indian looked down at his dog incredulously, and then at me, his stolid face showing more surprise than I had thought possible. But he gave no evidence of resentment, and after another look at the dog he sauntered back up the beach.

My marksmanship was not always that good as I continued my work of execution, and many a potential victim kept out of range. But as the morning advanced I was able to make a satisfactory showing: I had about twenty mangy dogs to my credit when an Indian hurried up to me.

"You shoot my brother; you come!"

It was now my turn to look incredulous, but I followed him to where a group of Indians had gathered around a man sitting on some driftwood. It was true; I had wounded him in the leg. Apparently a bullet had glanced on a stone and was lodged under the skin about midway above the knee. A small crowd followed us to the school and stood around excitedly while I dressed the wound. Scowling darkly, the brother then made a long speech which my interpreter translated in few but grim words.

"He say he want twenty-five blankets." There was a discouraging note of finality in her voice as she went on, "He say he get mad if you don't pay."

However just the claim may have seemed to them, there could be no compromising with this demand; it must be turned down definitely, then and there. They knew that I had succeeded in composing a long-standing difference between the Eagle and Raven clans in another village, where an Eagle had fallen from a Raven's boat and drowned; the Ravens had accepted my decision that fifty blankets were due the Eagles. In explaining this transaction I called their attention to the fact that when it was a difference between Indians only, it could be settled according to the Indian law. But this was a matter between them and the Government, which settled all claims for damages through the courts. Furthermore, I added, the Government maintains a big, cold jail in Juneau where people who make trouble are locked up indefinitely. Some of them still grumbling, while others nodded approval, they dispersed, leaving me by no means easy in my mind over the accident.

Late that night the little reassurance I had mustered before falling asleep was shattered when two big Indians entered my room. They stood beside the door, one holding high a lantern which threw deep shadows and highlights across their faces, doubling their size and giving them expressions of diabolical savagery.

"My baby sick," one of them growled. "You come."
What was this, a hold-up? The teacher lived in the parsonage beside the church; I was alone with a couple of tough-looking Indians, probably relatives of the man I had accidentally shot. A stream of wild thoughts ran through my mind as I sat on the edge of my cot and tried to dress calmly; then, reaching under the pillow, with great deliberation I transferred a regulation Army

pistol to my coat pocket. I noted an extra gleam in their eyes as they watched this manœuvre.

Following them along a path between the houses, my medicine case in one hand, the other clasping the pistol, we came to a lighted cabin; inside was a mother holding a very sick baby. Nothing whatever was said about dogs, mangy or otherwise, and the men escorted me safely back to the school.

IN practically all isolated villages the Indians' education began with their enrolment in the local church. Thus nominally converted to Christianity, the process of civilizing them slowed down and usually came to a stop when they were purged of their primitive customs and cultures. Tribal songs and dances were interdicted, idolatrous totem poles chopped down and burned, and meaningless stripes were substituted for totemic designs formerly woven into their baskets. Age-old Indian marriage ceremonies were annulled and forbidden, regulation church weddings made obligatory. I knew an old couple who had lived together more than forty years in Indian wedlock, and had at least a dozen grandchildren, who were forced to choose between a Christian remarriage and arrest on charges of illegal cohabitation.

But not all marriages were thus sanctified, and not all matches were made in heaven. "Parson Brown," a notorious character in the north, had fallen from grace at an earlier period to become an expert faro dealer in the periods of his sobriety and a piano-player in dance-halls during his frequent excursions into the realms of Bacchus. Drunk or sober, he was a gifted speaker and preached many a stirring sermon, when in a repentant mood, in many a saloon.

One night in Valdez the Parson was playing a piano in the Gold-North dance-hall where twenty or thirty squaws were dancing with as many miners. At length, exhilarated by wine and rhythmic music, he was moved to quit the orchestra and begin preaching, an undertaking he carried out so effectively that his slightly befuddled audience was soon on its knees. In a burst of eloquence he exhorted them to abandon their sinful, adulterous ways; still preaching fervently, he passed among them, blessing each couple as they knelt on the floor. When the emotional storm had subsided it was discovered that the Parson, in blessing, had also married them, that each squaw had a white husband. There was considerable good-natured hilarity until it was pointed out that the Parson was, in fact, an ordained minister. Complications arising therefrom gave reasons for many a headache.

In one village I explored a church and found hundreds of seal, otter, marten, mink and a few silver-fox skins hanging from wires strung across the attic, representing fees charged for weddings, baptisms, christenings, funerals, blessings bestowed on new houses, canoes and other undertakings. Salvation in that village was free, but its accoutrements were not without price.

As a final civilizing influence the Indians' descriptive names were modernized: such appellations as "Tan Tamish," meaning Bright Moonlight, and "Itty Um Doo," translated freely into North Wind Blowing, were changed to Bessie Jackson and Charley Jones. The unimaginative repetition of common names given the Indians, probably as safeguards against sacrilegious memories being carried over into new lives, also resulted in some interesting repercussions. Ole Johnson, a rather well-known stamperder into the goldfields, returned to the north several years later to show his new and possibly not too trusting wife the country from which he had wrested a fortune. At Ketchikan a fat squaw called Minnie Johnson was selling moccasins on the wharf. The coincidence amused the bride, and at Wrangel she asked another native woman, similarly engaged, her name. It was Susie Johnson. At Petersburg a squaw grinned broadly as the Johnsons approached her stand; she seemed to be almost too friendly. Amusement was by now soured with suspicion.

"Do you know that creature?"

"Of course not! Never saw her before in my life."

The bride examined a basket. "And what is your name?" The inquiry was hissed through clenched teeth and tight lips.

"Sarah Johnson."

Explanations were of no avail. The wife burst into tears and fled back to the ship, where she remained throughout the voyage.

As native women were usually very kindly disposed toward men with whiter skins, many a lonesome pioneer found in an incurious and tractable squaw an answer to his deep craving for companionship. One squaw-man whom I came to know quite well, and who later reached a position of great wealth and distinction in the territory, enumerated qualities in which Indian women excelled their white sisters. The native woman, he said, was strong, healthy, and perfectly adapted to life in the north; she never gossiped, whined, nagged, pouted or had spells, and she never questioned what her man told her. He could have added truthfully that her first cost was extremely modest; that

when once thoroughly deloused and scrubbed, the trouble and expense of upkeep was trifling, and that with decent treatment she was reasonably faithful.

No one could be greatly concerned over the fate or morals of the native women, some of whom changed homes and husbands almost as often as gowns. But what to do with adolescent and often pretty girls, of whose white or Indian fathers the mothers themselves could never be quite sure, was a grave problem. While still children many of them had been taken to Government mission schools for education and training, in the hope that when sent back to their villages they would assist in leading their people from darkness to light. It was a pleasant, soul-satisfying dream, with terrible odds against its realization.

I was in Shakan, a fishing village on Prince of Wales Island, when Mary Jones and Mary Williams were thus returned after eight or ten years in the Indian school at Chemawa. The girls, scrubbed within an inch of their lives, neatly clad, and radiant with the enthusiasm and bloom of youth, stood at the ship's rail while she docked, searching anxiously for some familiar face, for some friendly greeting. No one whom they knew was there, but no less than a dozen white fishermen were already eyeing them covetously.

Late that afternoon I ran across Mary Williams, standing despairingly outside a small dilapidated shack on the beach. Squatting on the dirt floor inside was her mother, a veritable hag, weaving a basket in the midst of indescribable filth such as I had seldom seen in a human habitation. It was plain that mother and daughter had reached an impasse, that the situation was as impossible for the daughter as it appeared to me.

It proved to be even more impossible than it looked. The old woman's small watery eyes lighted with greedy understanding when I stepped inside; her mind was incapable of finding but one reason for my presence.

"Twenty-fi dollar," she mumbled, stretching forth a grimy paw. "She nice, good girl; she same like white girl."

Here, certainly, was a golden opportunity to do some uplifting. The local missionary was spending a few days at a cannery when I called at the parsonage, and his wife, the only white woman within twenty miles, regretted firmly that she had no spare room for Mary Williams, not even in the church.

"I know all about them girls," she began darkly. "I saw them

on the dock an' I wouldn't let neither one of 'em step a foot inside my house." Her voice rose to a thin nasal whine as she went on at length about native girls coming back to the village, dressed like hussies, and making eyes at every white man in sight; men were hard enough to manage when the natives looked and acted natural and stayed home where they belonged.

I was not acquainted with the Reverend Blank, and my sympathies were not handed out recklessly to missionaries, but had he chosen to remain at the cannery indefinitely I would have understood. When I left the village next day Mary Williams was living on a fisherman's boat; a month later Mary Jones was working in a dance-hall in Douglas.

My contract with the Bureau of Education ended in November, when furious gales sweeping down from Bering Sea serve notice of winter's imminence. Heavy rains turn to snow on the mountains and begin creeping down their slopes, and soon the world between sky and sea becomes one vast undulating band of silver. As though his interests were elsewhere, or his powers spent, the sun each day grows more reluctant to appear; after increasingly long twilights of indecision, he rides across a flattened arc between the mountain tops, but his transit is so short and oblique his warm breath never reaches beyond the frozen glaziers at his feet. Farther north he refuses to show his face at all.

But there were always vivid recollections of preceding months, when stormy seas and barren, fog-bound tundras were far away and all but forgotten; when ice and snow lingered only on glacier and mountain top, and the quiet splendour of long summer days, deep cool fiords, innumerable unexplored islands, coves and inlets were irresistibly fascinating.

I have no recollection of deciding to remain in Alaska; the idea must have taken root and flourished so insidiously, yet firmly, that there had been no occasion to consider any other course. In one year I had seen more of the country's half-million square miles and met more of its fifty thousand inhabitants than had many an Alaskan in a lifetime. I had come to think of it, and them, both tolerantly and possessively, as one looks upon relatives who turn out to be much better than expected. I was no longer inexperienced in the simple essentials of medical practice, and it had become a thoroughly enjoyable vocation. And I had saved almost a thousand dollars.

In view of these facts and circumstances I wrote an imploring letter to that Only Girl in San Francisco, in which Alaska and the future were painted in the flaming colours of a tourist bureau circular. . . .

If the zest for pioneering still appealed to her, she must hurry. . . . Modern conveniences were pressing in upon us and, it was said, were ruining the country; at the rate we were going, life in Alaska would soon be as soft and colourless as it was in California. . . . The banker had installed an electric light plant with sufficient current to supply three sixteen-candle-power globes in any house in town at a flat rate of \$2.50 each per month; a man had shipped in five cows and was peddling fresh milk with a dog-team at fifty cents a pint; a man and his wife had started a laundry; another a weekly newspaper. . . . I had rented a three-room, comfortably furnished house adjoining my office; my practice was intact and growing; all my debts except to Dr. Ward and the college had been paid. . . . There was a good restaurant across the street, and I had won twenty dollars by eating a roasted wild duck every day for three weeks. . . .

In January came the anxiously awaited reply: that Only Girl would arrive in Seattle February 15th and leave on the *Ramona* sailing the 17th. What should she wear? What should she bring? A letter addressed to the Ranier-Grand Hotel would reach her, if delivered before the sailing date. She hoped the ground would be covered with snow. She also hoped the Indians were tame, the white people nice, and that my house had a bath.

There were five or six bath-tubs in town, but none of them was for sale—not even the houses containing them were for sale. But I had a big iron wash-tub kept conveniently under the kitchen table, and my private water system, an original creation, was in good working order. A plumber had fitted a coil into the kitchen stove, connecting it to a fifty-gallon whisky barrel sitting on a platform beside it, with a faucet near the bottom and a pipe leading to the sink. By pouring water, snow or ice into the barrel, an abundance of hot water was available, tempered and replenished by adding more snow.

Of this there was an unlimited supply; it was packed at least a foot deep in the street and many times that depth in the open spaces. The usual January thaw had come early, with a week or so of cold rain, followed by snow, which buried, temporarily,

heaps of ugly refuse, blending the tumbledown unpainted shacks into a background of pure white mountains.

I was the busiest man in town. The house must be cleaned, windows washed, floors scrubbed and painted. Furniture must be dusted, polished and arranged, changed, rearranged. There must be more fuel in the woodshed, more nails in the clothes closet, more utensils in the kitchen. Shelves must be washed and covered with clean newspapers with the edges nicely scalloped, then filled with everything the market afforded.

Then began another period of anxious waiting. The ship was due to sail on the 17th, but did it? There was no means of knowing. If it had sailed, was She aboard? This, too, must remain unanswered until the vessel arrived. When should it arrive? That depended on several unpredictable contingencies such as head winds, fogs, blinding snow, catching the tides at Seymour Narrows; vessels timed their departure from Seattle to reach this treacherous passage at high or low tide, when the racing, swirling current had spent its velocity and was turning.

Denny, the restaurateur, was sympathetic and sought to calm my uneasiness with thoughts of food. "When she come you get married right away? All right; where you go then? All right, you come here. I save two nice, young, fat mallard for you; I make the best goddam dinner in Alaska."

At the trading post old Joe Baker consulted a tide table, figured that if the *Ramona* left on the 17th, at nine o'clock, the usual hour, she would have to wait at the narrows four or five hours for slack water. Therefore she had probably put off sailing until early afternoon, giving the young lady an extra half-day in Seattle, which would ensure her catching the boat. Allowing four days for the voyage, she should get in tomorrow.

"Might as well go on to bed, Doc," he consoled me, preparing to close up for the night. "I been a-watching these boats more'n thirty year, an' when they's a offshore wind an' a full moon they ain't nothin' to be a-skeered of. She'll be here around four o'clock tomorrow—if she don't hit a rock or somethin'."

AT four o'clock the *Ramona* tied up at the dock; we were married at five, and the roasted mallards with wild blueberry sauce, freshly baked sourdough bread, and a really fine claret, were all the kindly but profane restaurateur had promised. Later in the evening, following an old Alaskan custom in which social bars were lowered to the extent of including a few Indians, many mixed bloods, and all but the most disreputable white, we were boisterously kidnapped, bundled on to a sled behind a dog-team and paraded down to the Redman's Hall, where a crowd had gathered to meet the bride, nibble at sandwiches, drink our health, and dance until morning.

But with the last notes of "Home, Sweet Home" the lines against dereliction of duties within and encroachments from without the social structure were again tightened; there must be no false impressions of equality nor misunderstandings as to who's who. To that end one of society's arbiters called next morning to give the lowdown on everyone in town; that same afternoon another arbiter performed a similar service, but gave different versions and classifications, which left the bride exactly where she started with respect to the very best people, but thrilled and charmed with the country and undaunted at having acquired a frost-bitten nose and ears the first day after she arrived.

Temperatures varied from a few degrees above zero in the daylight hours to twenty or more below at night; therefore keeping house for the first time in three small, cold rooms lighted with three dim lamps, through twenty hours of darkness and twilight on the brightest days, entailed some perplexing readjustments. It was necessary to melt ice and snow to procure water, to cook on a small stove over an uncertain wood fire, to bathe and eat in the kitchen, to experiment with frozen meats, desiccated vegetables, canned milk and stale eggs. A thick coating of frost obscured the windows, snow drifted in around the doors. There was no ready-made entertainment to ward off deadly boredom; communication with the outside world was uncertain and

infrequent; the San Francisco earthquake and fire was two weeks old when we first heard of it.

Loneliness was there, and homesickness, ever-present spectres haunting crowded cities and frozen solitudes impartially, creeping in of a night when a death-like stillness settled over the little town, broken only by occasional footsteps or voices which were, perhaps, friendly, but certainly not those of friends. With morning came the ravens. These sombre creatures arrived at dawn in flocks to line up on the roofs, resume their incessant quarrelling among themselves, and to croak cynically when my wife tried to shoo them away. Held sacred and inviolable by the Indians as forbears of the Raven Clan, they were never molested, and in return, perhaps being cognizant of some remote kinship, gathered in great numbers in all the Indian villages.

Main Street, and all the houses standing on one side, overhung the waters of the bay, which at high tide came up nearly to the kitchen floor to slap and tug at the piles until my wife feared they might give way. But as the weather moderated and spring approached, living over the water afforded at least one mild diversion. The hinged seat of a box-like affair enclosing an opening in the floor of a shed adjoining the kitchen simplified garbage disposal while providing toilet facilities, all refuse presumably being carried away by the receding tides. Mary, a young Indian who came of a morning to clean the office and help around the house, called attention to another use to which this convenience could be put. On calm days when the tide was in my wife and the native girl fished enthusiastically through this hole with mutual profit, the one in sport and the other in fish, all of which she dutifully carried home to her mother.

Shortly after we were married my first major emergency caught up with me; a well-known young woman became suddenly and seriously ill with what her father dismissed as "another bilious spell," but which showed all the signs and symptoms now easily recognized as acute appendicitis. This disease was not then so well known, nor did authorities agree on its proper treatment, some advising starvation, morphine, and watchful waiting, while others, equally authoritatively, advocated immediate operation. I had witnessed perhaps a dozen appendectomies, and had assisted in three or four, but had never been called upon to recognize the disease, nor to decide whether or not to operate,

nor to bear any responsibility when such decision had been made.

Through the night I read everything my three surgeries had to say on the subject, and watched the patient's condition grow more alarming. Next morning, after giving her a dose of morphine, I told her father what I suspected, summoned courage to advise operation. His wife, an Indian, gave her consent without hesitation, but he acquiesced with an air of ominous warning which added nothing to my composure. The waitress-druggist thought she could give the chloroform, or continue giving it after I put the patient under. But could she? And could I watch them both while concentrating on the precarious undertaking before me? A flood of disconcerting possibilities poured in upon me as I prepared the operating-room, which connected a saloon, owned by the patient's father, with the family living quarters and which was chosen because of its two large gasoline lamps and a stove in one corner.

Chairs were removed, the floor and lower walls sprinkled with bichloride solution, a narrow faro table brought in for the patient, another table arranged for basins and supplies. Meanwhile my wife was in the kitchen sterilizing instruments, sutures, drains, towels and sheets, using a wash-boiler. She was a tower of strength and a mine of resourcefulness; but trained nurses, I reflected glumly, were not necessarily trained surgical assistants.

No combination of instincts and emotions ever affected me so deeply and lastingly as did those present while preparing to make my first abdominal incision, entirely without benefit of professional aid, or even consultation, and nothing in my subsequent experience, however unusual or trying, stands out so clearly in my memory. If there is any such phenomenon as an internal chill, I was suffering one; every muscle in my body seemed to be quivering with apprehension; my mouth and throat were painfully dry, yet I was sweating from every pore. I wished with all my heart that I had allowed the father's diagnosis to stand; appendicitis was something new and uncertain, but everyone knew all about bilious colic; it was one of the good old stand-bys used by doctors when they were stuck, and accepted by the laity without question. Suppose this turned out to be something of the kind, after all? The thought gave me another, harder chill.

The patient was half-asleep from morphine when we carried her in; a few minutes later she was completely under the chloro-

form and draped with sheets and towels wrung from the steaming wash-boiler. As the moment arrived to again scrub and rinse my hands I observed with some surprise that they were steady, that I breathed more easily, that much of my former perturbation had given way to calmness. Behind me through the thin partition came murmuring voices, an occasional oath, the vibration of heavy footsteps. With folded arms and a grim expression around his mouth, the father stood against the wall watching my every movement; the mother sat behind the stove, her eyes round with fear and bewilderment. It was an occasion she never quite understood and never remotely appreciated.

Providentially, the operation was successful; a ruptured appendix was removed and the patient made a complete recovery. But as a demonstration of approved surgical technique as of that day and date it would have rated very low; upon reading it up again that night I was reminded of several meticulously described details I had skipped or overlooked, and this in spite of having committed them to memory step by step.

But in the light of modern surgical practice my almost subconscious performance was not so bad; much of what I inadvertently omitted is now generally condemned, and the caution, simplicity and care with which I proceeded through doubts and fears are now dictated by wisdom and experience.

My first dozen or so obstetrical cases, most of which were natives, were instructive in revealing the certainty with which babies are born with or without a doctor's assistance. But I was yet to learn that a normal pregnancy in a normal woman did not necessarily terminate in the normal delivery of a normal infant; that probably in no other field of medicine were the results of negligence on the one hand and unwise or inept interference on the other so frequently and so suddenly disastrous.

Indian women usually had their first babies in their middle or late teens, and remained off their feet not longer than the following day. One or more old women, experienced in such matters, were present to assist with words of encouragement and to grunt along with the prospective mother during each pain. As labour progressed, one of them would tie a wide band around the patient's abdomen, which was given a good twist with a stick, tourniquet fashion, following each contraction. My job was to stand around in the darkened room awaiting a final expulsive effort. I was then

allowed to tie and cut the umbilical cord; then again I waited to assure myself that the placenta was expelled intact.

It was, I decided, a messy and tiresome business. The only physical examinations permitted must be made through several skirts or blankets, and sometimes through both; therefore there was not even the satisfaction of having learned something. The presence of a man in the room during childbirth was forbidden by an age-old taboo, which had been broken down to some extent by intermarriage with the whites, but Indian women were still extremely sensitive in respect to exposure of the body. Hence the dark room and coverings.

This is not to say the inhibitions of modesty were also bulwarks of chastity; virtue was a fixed standard of maidenly conduct which marriage often turned into a convention to be broken without serious consequences. In fact, the notoriously hospitable Eskimo host was very apt to offer his wife, overnight, to a welcome guest along with a corner of his igloo.

I was not greatly interested in obstetrics, and nothing in my experience with the natives had tended to increase it, when I was called to a case which upset all my premature convictions. A daughter of chief Kadeshian had been in labour two days without making satisfactory progress; old Klaoook, the medicine man, had succeeded with his incantations in increasing the severity of her pains, but nothing had come of them. Mrs. Lewis, my first patient, prevailed on the girl's mother to send for me.

I found her in the position customary among Indian women when in labour, half-reclining on the floor, bundled to the neck in blankets, a rag gripped between her teeth, her feet braced against wooden blocks fastened to the floor. According to her mother's calculations the baby was due; her daughter had felt its movements for the past four or five months; labour pains had commenced and continued in the usual manner.

Her size, as nearly as I could make out, corresponded with that of pregnancy at term; the contractions were strong and regular. Through the coverings I could feel nothing more than a greatly distended and very tense abdomen, which was not surprising, since only once before had I succeeded in identifying with certainty any part of a baby before its birth. The delay, I decided, must be due to insufficiently strong contractions, which a good dose of ergot should remedy.

Late that night her pains were continuing with the same force,

and frequency; next morning her condition had not changed. Obviously something had to be done, but what? Nothing in my books said anything about locating the cause of delayed labour in a dark room, the patient swathed in skirts and blankets; doubtless the authors were quite as inexperienced in such situations as was I.

Finally, disregarding grunts of disapproval, I pulled aside the coverings, made a very unsatisfactory examination which told me nothing more than that there seemed to be no obstruction. Then from somewhere within the recesses of my memory came the recollection of a seldom seen word, pseudocyesis. Ignoring still more and angrier grunts, I gave the patient enough chloroform to put her asleep; with relaxation her abdomen flattened out; the diagnosis became clear. She was not and probably never had been pregnant.

The old women sat pop-eyed, with mouths agape at this demonstration of "white man's medicine," while the incredulity, and later the consternation, stamped on Kadeshan's wife, as her long-expected grandchild fairly melted into nothingness before her eyes, probably transcended any similar feelings she had ever before experienced. It was something I could not satisfactorily explain to her, and she never for one moment doubted that my magic had done away with the baby.

False pregnancies, often inspired by ulterior motives, have been known since the days of Hippocrates, and the pure psychotic type in which elderly women with an intense desire for children are themselves deceived is not particularly rare. But this woman was young, and I could find nothing in her life or history to account for her strange performance. When I last saw her some twenty years later she had given birth to seven children, with no more false alarms.

THE partnership entered into the day after we were married was conducted on a fifty-fifty plan, my wife maintaining herself and the household on half my collections, while I paid office and personal expenses from the balance, along with something each month on my indebtedness. I also went in rather heavily on office equipment and on articles grouped roughly as incidentals, which, incidentally, had always been a greater drain on my resources than had all my necessities combined.

My practice had grown at a satisfactory pace until practically all the people in town were my patients, but treatment in some of the more difficult, therefore more interesting, cases was often so disappointing I sometimes wondered just what proportion of those who recovered had been cured? This was of no consequence in small, everyday complaints; they all got well or improved, and I accepted the credit with becoming modesty. But there were others belonging in a different category, not disposed to spontaneous recovery; neither were they to be remedied by inept or impotent measures, nor by what was then called masterful inactivity. These were the tests of skill and understanding with which doctors were supposed to be richly endowed, and not many failures could be charged to inscrutable Providence or to bad luck. The conviction was growing in my mind that something was lacking in me, and that it was nothing less than sufficient knowledge and experience.

It was also clear that our idealistic venture into domestic finances should be more realistically prosecuted; money was pouring in at the rate of several hundred dollars a month, and incidental expenses kept piling up which were met with increasing difficulty. It was even necessary on occasion to borrow a few dollars from my wife. These loans were always repaid promptly, but often at considerable inconvenience.

One evening after adding my receipts for the month and dividing the sum by two, I was dismayed to find that after giving my wife her share there was exactly four dollars remaining for me. It was an embarrassing moment, but, I reasoned, nothing was to

be gained by calling attention to water already over the dam, especially as I had in mind a scheme for remedying the situation. Therefore, as tactfully as possible I suggested that if she could manage, say, on a third instead of half our income, I could begin saving for a badly needed course of post-graduate study. Then on our return we would move to a larger town where living conditions more nearly approximated those in the States, and where my practice would keep on growing. Once established there, we could go back to our original fifty-fifty plan.

Her smile was vague and non-committal, but her manner was reassuring as she passed over the delicate matter of how much to whom, to agree cheerfully that a few months in a good clinic would do me a world of good; she had always thought I was wasting my time among the Indians. She then drifted off into sheer wishful thinking.

"Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could go now?" she proposed. "If we could catch the next boat to Seattle, then go on to New York, where you could study while I did some shopping? And at night we'd take in some good shows."

The idea grew exceedingly painful to me as she continued its development, quite unaware, apparently, that I had only four dollars in cash to my name. She declared she was not exactly homesick. After the earthquake San Francisco could never again be the same. But slopping around in the rain was getting on her nerves. She sometimes wondered if such civilizing agencies as crowded streets, beautiful shops, the perfume of flowers and songs of meadow-larks still existed?

Some realization of what she had given up came to me as she went on and on, and I vowed silently but sincerely to mend my spendthrift ways. On my books was nearly a thousand dollars in unpaid fees, most of which could be collected if I went after it.

"I'll see what I can do," I promised remorsefully. "I've got a lot of money coming to me that I'll start collecting tomorrow, and I'll turn it all over to you. When you say we have enough, we'll go; we'll have that delayed honeymoon we've been promising ourselves and I'll do some studying, too. We should make it in a few months; if I can't collect enough I'll borrow what we lack."

She shook her head at that. "It would be so much nicer to go now, before something comes up that you can't leave." Then, with a note of challenge in her voice, "Could you get away if you had the money?"

"I certainly could! Tomorrow, if there was a boat."

She stepped into the bedroom, then returned holding something heavy behind her. She had often spoken of keeping her money in one of my woollen socks, which she now dropped at my feet. It was nearly filled with gold coins and must have weighed almost two pounds.

When we were married I had divided my savings equally, and had assumed, indifferently, that much of what I had given her had gone for a fur coat she bought in Seattle. But to those few hundred dollars she had added each month an unbelievable amount from her allowance, giving me an actual demonstration in conservation of resources which I never forgot and to this day bow before in humble admiration. Next day I gave my patients a three-months' moratorium on their bills; three days later we caught the first boat south on our way to New York.

Before we reached Seattle we were surprised to find ourselves looking forward to an early return; after a week in New York we each confessed a slight feeling of homesickness for the quiet security and even the loneliness of Alaska. On the surface the city was still the same swiftly moving, clamorous, predatory and fascinating pandemonium I had carried in my mind, and bragged about, as the soul and substance of urban life, the exemplar of custom, the infallible criterion of values. But in some respect either it or I had changed; New Yorkers were no longer my people. I was a stranger in a foreign land and was immediately hailed as such; while making our way through the crowded station someone tried to pick my pocket, and at the curb, while calling a cab, a shifty-eyed man pan-handled me for a dime. Worse still, the cab-driver himself short-changed me at the hotel.

The hurt and humiliation was not that these indignities had been perpetrated, but that anyone had the unmitigated gall to try them on me. How was it possible that marks of sophistication acquired in one of the most worldly-wise streets in the country could be so completely washed out in so short a time? Why was I, who once had known all the tricks and answers and doubtless showed it in every look and action, so quickly spotted as an easy mark for the cheapest sort of crook and grafter?

The hotel man pondered the matter discreetly, then suggested it might be the way I walked and gazed about, instead of plunging straight ahead. But my wife, an enthusiast for window-shopping

in which I participated reluctantly, said it was my hat. This was a very fine light-coloured Stetson with not much more than a three-inch brim, and practically new, but she said everyone stared at it. And she may have been right; when I bought a plain black fedora I was only occasionally singled out as easy pickings.

In a week or so she decided that California met all her requirements in respect to crowds, and it was evident I would get on better if I gave my undivided attention to study. She therefore departed for San Francisco, and I moved in with the interns at the Lying-in Hospital on Second Avenue.

Three months in the Lying-in and Bellevue did, indeed, do me a world of good. At the former hospital, where I slept of a night and spent most of the morning hours, I was permitted to examine hundreds of women and assist more or less in delivering hundreds of babies. And what one could learn at Bellevue was limited only by his staying qualities and capacity for absorption; its huge wards held all kinds of injuries, diseases, deformities and defects which one could examine and study to his heart's content, and each step in operation and treatment could be followed up indefinitely.

I was in New York nearly two months before the temptation to explore some of my old haunts became irresistible; most of the remembrances surviving my determination to forget that period were unpleasant, and I was wholly engrossed in the hospitals. Behind the World Building I had no difficulty in locating the grate upon which I, along with other stray youngsters, had slept, or shivered, through many a cold night when we were broke. I understood it was still an emergency thawing-out place in winter for low-grade vagabonds, but newsboys in distress could now find comfortable quarters uptown.

At the East River Docks I found the same cleat near a corner of the warehouse upon which I had sat while debating in my mind whether or not to hit the *Escobar's* mate for a job. Again sitting there that October afternoon, I could easily imagine the calendar turning back ten years: around me was the same clean, salty fragrance of the sea; before me an old tramp steamer, which might have been another *Escobar*, was heaving at her lines.

Suppose some malevolent instrumentality had directed the improvident, day-dreaming lad of twenty, who had sat there thinking about the advisability of deciding to look for work, elsewhere that summer afternoon? Or suppose the *Escobar* had

been bound north, or east, or that her cargo had not included contraband for the Cuban army? What would he have done? What would the following ten years have done to him?

The questions were idle but sobering. I could imagine no reasonable answers which came anywhere near forecasting my present situation and circumstances, and I was profoundly thankful to whatever beneficent genius had taken the matter out of my hands and nudged me gently towards the *Escobar's* rail. It had been the most fateful and far-reaching step I had ever taken. On that voyage General Nunez gave me an inkling of my ancestry: it led to filibustering on a large scale, in which I attracted Captain Cartyra's attention, who gave me an introduction to Harvard's Dean Richardson, who strengthened and made unalterable my determination to study medicine.

But just how much, I wondered, did unalterable determination have to do with it? It certainly was through no act of volition on my part that I ran across Seth Bullock that day on Fourteenth Street, when I was down to my last few cents; I was then torn between joining the Astor Battery and making my way to Alaska's goldfields. Nor had I intentionally taken that wildest ride of my life halfway across the continent to miss, by a day, a chance to join the Rough Riders. I had not planned meeting a stranger in a beer garden near San Antonio whose chance remark inspired me to ask for a job, of all places, at an insane asylum. From that day and date a fixed desire began maturing into something approaching determination, but the soil had been prepared by chance, or perhaps destiny.

Shortly before leaving New York I had the good fortune to spend an evening with Dr. Marcoe, then Chief of Staff at the Lying-in Hospital. The occasion arose from his curiosity over the whereabouts of a friend who had not been heard from since the day he left San Francisco in the gold-rush to Alaska. As discreetly as possible I accounted for his friend's silence, which led to child-bearing customs of Indians and Eskimos, in which Dr. Marcoe, as an obstetrician, was interested. Later in the evening he suggested that I apply for a year's residency in the hospital, which, if I were accepted, would be a step towards eventual specialization.

Coming from one of New York's well-known physicians and a founder of the Lying-in, this was something to think about.

But at the moment I could not convince myself that probable gains justified the inevitable costs, even if I had the money. Furthermore, I was homesick for Alaska and I was beginning to like general practice.

Dr. Marcoe agreed that, having found an uncrowded niche in the professional world, it was wise to make the most of it; doubtless another opportunity would present itself later. In general he disapproved young doctors rushing into special practice; it was only after years of experience in all departments of medicine and surgery that one could determine in which, if any, he excelled, which was the only proper reason for specialization. He declared the word itself was beginning to lose its implied meaning; that there was nothing in it, *per se*, which made its devotees superior to those who applied their learning to broader fields. In fact, the reverse was often true. It was a simple matter for anyone of average intelligence and ability to become conversant with any subject if it were sufficiently limited in its scope. But to become a capable, all-round general practitioner called for a rather high order of ability.

Other specialists had said or written something of the kind, but always with a slightly patronizing air, giving one to understand that general practice was a refuge of incompetence, rather than a laudable object of proficiency. What Dr. Marcoe had to say about it made me more eager than ever to get back to Alaska.

But there was one pregnant moment in San Francisco when the scales were about evenly balanced between remaining in the city and returning to the north. On one side was a chance to enter practice under the sponsoring wing of Dr. Ward, with a reasonable expectation of inheriting some small part of his exclusive clientele, while on the other hand an indefinable but compelling charm, overlooked while there, but now missed keenly, was pulling me northward. The matter was settled one evening when, in a burst of extravagance, we had dinner in a fashionable café. This gave us a preview of first prizes in the lottery of medicine, from which, a classmate told me, he had drawn little else than blanks.

As prospective patients the prizes we saw that night were not very tempting. There were a few youngish, bejewelled and beefy personages on exhibition, who seemed to be in greater need of a sense of humour, some exercise and a stiff reducing diet than medicine. But most of them had already outrun their years, and

were slowing down to give time a chance to catch up and add the score. I knew of no restorative for the disillusionment in their weary eyes, nor for the bored disdain in their play of features; I wanted my patients to be sick, to have something wrong that I could search out, put a finger on and say authoritatively thus and so. It was clear that I was not rich enough in experience and *savoir faire* to give this sort of clientele what it wanted, perhaps what it should have, and that I would fail if I tried.

In the stream of city life there was, of course, a channel between poverty's shoals and the deep waters of opulence. That was where I belonged and wanted to be, but it was overcrowded with young doctors whose services were not in great demand; they were there because they knew nothing better. Or they may have preferred remaining small ducks in a big pond to the reverse. But I knew a place where good doctors were by no means plentiful, where the duckling would have ample room to spread his wings. We decided to stick to our original intentions.

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EVERYONE in Alaska, while the country was still called "America's last frontier," agreed that its discomforts, hardships, and perennially its climate were unequalled in number, variety and vileness. But nearly everyone, having lived there and gone elsewhere, wanted to return, and having returned, soon began on the same old grievances. In this we were no exceptions; we had done our share of grumbling, to put it mildly, and went back with a resolve to complain no more; we had demonstrated to our own satisfaction that we could stand all its discomforts and we were determined to make the best of them without lament.

Our new home, to which we removed after exhausting all the immediate possibilities in the way of collecting my outstanding accounts, was in what claimed to be the biggest, wickedest and wettest town in the territory. For several weeks we succeeded in avoiding comments on the weather, until the year's record thus far was brought to our attention, showing less than three per cent. of possible sunshine, with one stretch of forty-two straight days of rain or snow, followed by another of thirty-six. We then fell into line and joined heartily in the universal pastime.

The town's sole reason for existence was its proximity to a gold-mine, said to be the largest of its kind in the world, which gave steady employment to about a thousand men and supported a total population of approximately three thousand people, who, in one way or another, lived off the mine's pay-roll and each other.

Superficially, it was comparable with our former location, but on a large scale; there were fewer Indians, squaw-men and ravens, and more empty tin cans, broken-down furniture and miscellaneous refuse in the streets and around the houses, more of which were on the verge of collapse. Apparently the same dingy shops and stores, saloons and dance-halls lined the same planked street over the same beach, and the same general type of good and bad women, clean and grubby children, and dogs were very much in evidence, multiplied several times. But of a night the street swarmed with miners of twenty-odd nationalities, off shift with time to kill, grudges to settle, business to transact and money

to spend, most of which probably bought more regrets than ultimate satisfaction.

It was evident that our arrival was opportune; while still at the wharf looking after our numerous effects I had my first call to a maternity case, and late that same night I sutured my first scalp wound, made with a beer-bottle in a dance-hall. These and other casualties resultant from alcoholic exuberance were so frequent around pay-days I outfitted a special emergency bag for use at these times labelled "D. and D." (drunk and disorderly).

It was strictly a one-man town, that man being the mine superintendent, whose job was anything but a sinecure; hard-rock mines and miners in Alaska were notoriously unresponsive to gentle treatment and soft words. To produce dividends for stockholders it was necessary to blast a thousand or more tons of quartz every day from ledges far underground, hoist them to the surface, transport them to stamp-mills, where they were crushed to a fine powder and the gold extracted. No laws were then in effect in Alaska regulating the operations of mines, and no sentimental nonsense was wasted on the miners; they worked in twelve-hour shifts day and night, seven days a week, and they were paid once a month, many of them in scrip good only at the company store.

In July a stranger came up from the States, got a job in the mine, and immediately began finding fault with a well-established custom. Each month the company charged all unmarried workers underground, usually spoken of as Square-heads or Bohunks, for board and lodging whether or not they ate and slept on the premises. It was argued by mine officials and employees not thus classified that, as the work was hard and dangerous, these men must be provided an abundance of substantial food and comfortable sleeping quarters. They should also be protected against low-grade boarding-house keepers and dives in town. When rumours of dissatisfaction with this custom finally reached the superintendent, he proceeded in his usual forthright manner to make a personal investigation.

Fingering a pick-handle, he stood beside the pay-window and asked each man as he presented himself if he was satisfied with his job, and if he had enough to eat. Replies were unanimously in the affirmative. That night in a mess-house when the agitator attempted to make a speech he was summarily shot down.

An elderly doctor long residing in town and then about ready

to retire from practice gave me the lay of the land along with some hints on the appropriate attitude of an independent doctor in a one-man mining camp. "You'll have all the work you can do," said he, "if you keep your mouth shut, mind your own business, and don't allow your sympathies to get out of hand. This town wouldn't be here if it wasn't for the mine, and the mine couldn't run without someone as hard-boiled as MacDonald at the head of it.

"And if you're wise," he continued, "you'll stand behind Kuhn, the mine doctor. There's plenty of crippled men around here who'll want your opinion as to whether he couldn't have done something more or better for them when they were hurt. I always say no one could possibly know, unless he saw the original injury and watched how it was treated; no one looking for a lawsuit can make anything out of that, and it's the truth.

"Kuhn doesn't do any private practice if he can get out of it, which means he'll send you some good cases and call you in consultation if he finds you're not trying to cut in on his contract. You couldn't get his job if you tried, and you wouldn't like it if you had it."

This good advice no doubt tended to clothe my conduct in circumspection and curb my natural inclination to pity the underdog before I knew whether or not he had a death grip on the top dog's vitals.

As the kindly old doctor predicted, I was soon deep in the always interesting, and very frequently puzzling, ramifications of general practice, in what was probably one of the most cosmopolitan and uninhibited communities of its size to be found anywhere. In every respect it was still a pioneer country, but differed from those of bygone days in climate, inaccessibility, isolation, and ready money. There were few women, relatively, to men, and few infirmities in either sex were due to constitutional disease or advancing years; it was also still a young man's country, with intemperance, exposure, and external violence the chief causes of disabilities. These responded rather quickly, if at all, to treatment.

The mine hospital was supported by monthly assessments from each employee, therefore no private patients were admitted except in extreme emergency. But three miles across the channel in the territorial capital a larger, better-equipped institution operated by the Sisters of St. Ann was available to us if and when it could

be reached. In summer a small, easily discouraged steam ferry made the crossing and returned at two-hour intervals from early morning until midnight, weather permitting. Aside from loss of time and a mile walk to and from the dock, this was no great affliction; the half-hour voyage was a restful interlude in a busy day. But in winter, which began in early September and ended late in May, to make the round trip on schedule was a feat in which sheer luck played no small part.

Furious gales then swept down between two high mountain ranges, driving sheets of icy spray before a white-capped, choppy sea with breath-taking velocity, while incoming tides and sub-zero temperatures often all but blocked the channel with icebergs and coated every exposed surface with ice. At these times the ferry, being unable to run, simply waited behind a protecting wharf until the storm abated; passengers remained at home or on the other side, as chance and weather ordained.

On one occasion, after taking a patient across to the hospital and standing by until her baby was born, I found myself stuck there for three days, which I improved by giving her more personal attention than any woman had need or reason to expect; as a matter of fact, I spent most of the time in the hospital. When the storm had apparently spent itself, ten stranded and disgruntled passengers boarded the ferry, only to have it sink beneath them when its lines were cast off. Another boat was substituted, encrusted ice was chopped off the deck, a feeble fire slightly warmed its cabin, and again we climbed aboard. We succeeded in crossing, but when the engine was slowed down to make a landing it stopped dead; strong offshore squalls carried us past the dock and on down the channel. Seven miles below town we fetched up on the beach; all of us got ashore, wet and cold, but safely. Someone started a fire; to keep from freezing, everyone, including three women, worked furiously carrying driftwood until the exertion and the fire warmed us thoroughly. A dog-team came down, picked up the women. The rest of us walked in; after a hot drink, dry clothing and a good dinner, none was worse for the experience.

Pioneer women of the north were outnumbered by men perhaps five to one, a state of affairs which nature attempted to remedy by endowing them with unusual courage and stamina and amazing fertility.

Contrary to my intentions, but probably owing to the absence of anyone better qualified, I soon gained something of a reputation as an obstetrician; and as about five babies were born at home to one in the hospital, it became necessary to devise a system by means of which this could be brought about safely and conveniently. I therefore wrote Dr. Marcoe for a practicable modification of the procedure in the Lying-in's out-patient department, as practised in lower New York's East Side. Based on his recommendations and on my own experience in local conditions, a routine was gradually worked out which served me well in more than two thousand deliveries in private homes under all sorts of circumstances.

First babies are always more interesting to the doctor, and most momentous to the mother in that, if the birth is normal and uncomplicated, subsequent labours are approached with less indecision and fear. When given sufficient warning of the prospective event, a thorough-going examination was always made, and specific advice given in respect to diet, exercise, personal hygiene, what to expect and what to avoid, how best to prepare herself for what could be made an extremely gratifying and not too difficult experience.

She was told to return each month until the sixth, then every two weeks, for advice, examinations and tests, and she was warned not to add more than twenty-five pounds to her weight. When this amount was exceeded, blithely she was told she need not return, that she was not co-operative. The effect was sometimes startling, but almost invariably good; usually she was back in a week or so with at least some of the excess poundage removed. Few if any patients were lost by this apparent stickling; on the contrary, new ones were gained through the advertising which a fasting primipara always broadcasts.

Shortly before the expected delivery the patient was given a list of supplies to be laid in, and asked to fetch to the office two sheets, four towels, three diapers, two pounds of cotton, five yards of gauze. My office nurse made up the cotton into pads, the bundle was wrapped in paper, sterilized, labelled and returned to the patient, to be opened only by me when needed.

When called to the house a nurse accompanied me, where, if labour was sufficiently advanced, she remained until it was finished. She prepared the bed by spreading newspapers over the mattress, then a sheet, then a square of oiled silk from my bag

covered with a sterile sheet. Excessive suffering and anxiety were relieved with a tablet of morphine and scopolamine, shades were drawn, quiet maintained. This so-called twilight sleep was used in hundreds of cases in private homes with no untoward effects on mother or child.

Finally, the patient was draped with the other sterile sheet, sterile towels were arranged to receive the baby. Sufficient chloroform was given by the nurse, or taken by the patient herself on the corner of a towel, to keep her comfortable, and at the moment of delivery to induce complete anæsthesia. Following the birth the mother was given ergot or pituitrin, or both, lacerations or preventive incisions were sutured, a tight abdominal binder applied. Meanwhile the nurse was caring for the baby's eyes, dressing the umbilical cord, pinning on a sterile diaper. Babies were rubbed with warm olive oil daily, but were not given a complete bath until later, often not for a week.

When there were no complications or stitches the mother was allowed to sit up in bed on and after the fourth day, out of bed on and after the sixth, up and dressed the tenth. Either the nurse or I called at the house every day or two during the mother's convalescence.

Supervision of the baby, however, was not so quickly terminated. He was brought to the office regularly to be weighed and admired, inspected and treated throughout his infancy and sometimes far beyond. I recall one exceptional case where my regular confinement fee was extended, quite nonchalantly by the mother, to include everything up to and including removal of the child's tonsils before he entered school.

My total charges for this all-inclusive Grade A service, in a country where costs were high, was seventy-five dollars. Grade B was reserved for most Indians and some whites into whose miserable shacks one had not the heart to take a nurse, or to whom having a baby was nothing more than a somewhat undesirable nuisance. They almost never made reservations for the blessed event, therefore had no pre-natal care and wanted none. With them it was simply a matter of getting it over as quickly as possible out of the resources of my bag and the mother's courage. The fee was proportionate to the family's fortunes, which usually were negligible.

But each baby added to my score, and crumbs of bread thus cast upon the waters sometimes returned in the form of cake. I

was literally astounded when one father, to whom I had delivered no less than six squalling hostages to posterity over a period of ten years, without thanks, and had bawled-out on numerous occasions for his carelessness, sauntered in with double the amount of my fees for them all; he had finally struck it rich for the moment.

And not so long ago an elderly woman came down from a large city with her beautiful daughter. Their present name meant nothing to me, but as we talked there came into my mind the recollection of a shrivelled, all but lifeless infant whose first respirations were established only after many minutes of direct mouth-to-mouth insufflations, in one of the filthiest surroundings I had ever visited, barring none. The father was a worthless young scamp, unwilling to work and unable to make a decent living otherwise, and for a month or more both mother and baby hung between life and death from malnutrition. And here they were, twenty years later and more than two thousand miles removed, mother and daughter sitting before me entirely self-possessed, expensively gowned, immaculate, asking my advice as to the need of an operation. I should have liked to know the story of those intervening years, the route over which Providence had guided them from extreme privation to affluence. But I could not bring myself to broach a subject which they evidently wished to forget; it was enough to know they had not forgotten me.

EMERGENCY surgery, performed on a kitchen table under the uncertain light of a kerosene lamp, deserves honourable mention in the annals of pioneer practice; in such circumstances major operations were fearsome undertakings, rarely, if ever, motivated by anything less than dire necessity. It is safe to assume that no so-called horse-and-buggy doctor ever ventured to open an abdomen to satisfy his curiosity, or for glory, or in anticipation of a fat fee; when he operated it was because of great and urgent need and there was no alternative but to do it himself.

But it was seldom so difficult for the doctor as it sounds, nor so hazardous for the patient as one might imagine. As a matter of fact, the outcome compared favourably with results of similar operations performed in the hospitals then available, which depend more on who does what, and why, than on the surroundings in which it is done. It also depends very largely on the patient himself, on his reactions to diseases and injuries; some men, and women too, seem to be devoid of fear, insensible to pain, immune to infections, and to possess a practically unbreakable vital tenacity.

I ran across numerous examples of stamina and fortitude in the north, not only in adults in whom one expects to find qualities of hardihood consistent with a rugged, inclement country, but in children as well. Several youngsters are recalled who permitted rather extensive wounds to be sutured without so much as a whimper, and one little girl of eight sat on a stool while I removed her tonsils without benefit of an anæsthetic. This was not cruelty: it simply didn't hurt.

Something far above and beyond the instinct of self-preservation, fortified with great physical strength and superb courage, entered into Jack Hogan's will to live. He had staked a mining claim near the beach on an island, where he built a cabin on a cliff overlooking the water and lived of a summer while doing assessment work on his prospective mine. One morning late in September he discovered that the dynamite used in blasting out his ledge had frozen. This was nothing unusual at that time of year, and interesting only as a reminder that he must soon give

up his prospecting until spring. But he was determined to fire one more shot and the dynamite must be thawed; therefore he started a small fire of twigs and chips, hammered flat an old kerosene can, placed it over the fire and laid half a dozen sticks of dynamite upon the tin. The wood was damp; the feeble blaze, which he kept alive by fanning with his hat, died out. Jack knelt down, began blowing the fire, when for some unknown cause the dynamite exploded, filling his face and eyes with dirt and ashes, completely blinding him.

Stunned, all but frantic with pain and mentally confused, he recalled a bucket of water in his cabin. He must find it, wash out his eyes. Crawling slowly, feeling his way and searching for some familiar object, he came upon his axe, which he had left beside a log that morning when chopping firewood. From its location he sought to orient himself in relation to his house, but he swerved to one side, slipped on a stone, fell over the cliff and rolled down into the cold waters of Prince William Sound.

The cold plunge cleared his brain and the salt water seemed to soothe the excruciating pain in his eyes. He knew the rocks could not be more than a few feet distant; reaching out, he attempted to swim and discovered one leg was also exceedingly painful. But it was so much less agonizing than his eyes, he continued using it, expecting each moment to strike bottom. Not for some time did he realize that the tide was carrying him offshore.

The island was not on any regular line of travel; there was no human habitation within thirty miles. His eyelids were swelling rapidly, soon he could not open them, but enough water seeped in to cool and ease his burning eyes. He had no recollection of counting the odds against him, no idea in which direction the tide was taking him; he was conscious of nothing but the pain and a grim determination to keep going until the last measure of his strength was gone.

In this condition he did, in fact, keep afloat three hours, and was picked up by some passing Indians five miles from the island. When he got to town it was found he was not only totally blind; he had a compound fracture of the right leg three inches above the ankle. Eventually he regained sufficient vision in one eye to distinguish familiar objects, but his prospecting days were over.

For more than a year I wondered, when I thought of it, what became of a man whom I had last seen under unusual circum-

stances to say the least, even for Alaska, where the exceptional often enough is commonplace. Late one night a stranger, evidently quite drunk, called me out to see a sick man on a small fishing boat, then tied up at the wharf. A dim light was shining through the open hatch as I climbed aboard, made by way down the steps into the fo'c'sle, where I found three men lying on their bunks, another slumped on a box beside the stove. One man raised his head, eyed me a moment, muttered thickly:

"That feller there, Ole, I tink he sick. I tink he got shot."

"The devil! How did that happen?"

No one answered me; no one, including the patient, was able, or perhaps willing, to give me any information. No one made the least effort to assist in an examination; I managed to pull up the man's shirt and found a bullet wound in his abdomen, about an inch below and to one side of the navel. Small gas bubbles were expelled with each expiration, indicating an intestine was punctured, and a thin trickle of dark blood had formed a clot in his groin. I could find no wound of exit, therefore concluded the bullet was still inside the body. His heart was weak and rapid, but regular; while I was examining it, he slid from the box to the floor.

Clearly, there was nothing to do for him in that crowded place. It was a case for the authorities; he must be taken ashore, the men held for an investigation. It was then about two o'clock. I hurried uptown, awakened the marshal, who expended more time and effort damning all drunken fishermen, severally and individually, than he did in dressing. When we finally reached the wharf the boat had gone.

The marshal made a few inquiries, but learned nothing more than that a boat had just pulled out; no one seemed to know its name. Grumbling, and expressing some doubt as to my sanity, if not my sobriety, he went back to bed.

Next morning when he found blood on the wharf he admitted I might have been both sane and sober after all. Several days later he learned the boat was a halibut fisherman, the *Goja*, which someone recalled having seen at the wharf that night. The matter remained one of those mysteries left for busy doctors to ponder until, many months later, a big Swede came into the office, asked if I knew him. I did not. Did I, then, remember the man on a boat with a bullet hole in his belly? I certainly did. He was that man, and to prove it pulled up his shirt to show me the scar.

He merely grinned when I asked who shot him, evidently looking upon his mishap as a minor accompaniment of the rough but innocent fun indulged by fishermen. As an example of insensibility to pain and indifference to consequences he was unique in my experience; he said the captain wanted to leave him on the wharf, but he wouldn't stand for it. They had gone out to the halibut banks two or three hundred miles offshore, where they stayed two or three weeks, then ran down to Seattle to sell their catch. He admitted his belly had been sore for a while; he had laid up in his bunk about a week, then went on regular shift and had suffered no bad after-effects.

Wabash Bill was a quiet, inoffensive little man with an iron nerve, a cool head, and an amazing capacity for punishment. But no one suspected it until after his mix-up with a brown bear. Landing at Rodman Bay with two companions on a hunting trip, Bill started out alone and got his deer about three miles from the beach. It was then shortly before noon. With the dressed carcass on his back, its legs tied together to form a sling resting on his shoulders, Bill started back, but had gone less than half a mile when he stumbled over a log and fell beside a brown bear with two cubs. In an instant she was upon him, cuffing, mauling, biting with all the startled fury generated by maternal instinct in defence of its young.

Fortunately for Bill, the deer was still on his back, its neck shoved upward and to one side, partly shielding his face and absorbing some portion of the bear's vicious attack. Finally, meeting no resistance, she lay down near her den, growling deep warnings and watching him closely for any sign of remaining life. Reassured by the mother, the cubs returned, sniffed him curiously, gradually began playing; one of them ventured to lick the blood on his hands and forehead and to nibble at his fingers.

Throughout the afternoon Bill lay as one dead. The bear's first onslaught knocked the rifle from his hand; it lay not more than three feet distant, but he dared not reach for it. Shortly before dark he moved a hand experimentally; with an angry roar the bear was upon him, biting and cuffing until satisfied he was no longer alive and dangerous. The cubs seemed to prefer the warmth of his body to their mossy bed under the log; at length they snuggled down beside him for the night.

Occasionally the bear came over to sniff his hands and face,

and once to claw at the deer and crunch the bones of its neck, within a few inches of his own neck. Once or twice through the night he could hear or feel the cubs moving about, but there were no more attacks. Next morning he thought they had surely gone; as he was lying on his side, his field of vision was limited, but he could hear no suspicious sounds. If he could only get that deer off his back; if he could only reach that rifle! Cautiously, he moved a finger, then a hand, then attempted to free his arm, which was disastrous. A cub, evidently lying near his feet, gave a squall, bringing its mother upon him with a bound that almost crushed him. Roaring fiercely, she again mauled him until he fainted; when he regained consciousness he could hear her muttered growls somewhere behind him.

All through that second day she remained near, and Bill made no more experimental moves; he could hear the cubs behind him, or to one side, and he knew so long as they were present the mother was not far away. By evening his cramped position and aching bones racked him with agonizing pains from head to foot. Through half-closed lids he could see the butt of his rifle, which now seemed even nearer than it was before; thoughts of another night of torture nerved him to one last effort. Slowly, silently, inch by inch, he freed one arm from the sling. All remained quiet. To free the other arm was more difficult; he must raise himself a few inches from the ground, and in doing so snapped a twig beneath him.

Leisurely, almost good-humouredly, from somewhere behind him the bear waddled around, sat on her haunches, her bared teeth and evil little eyes less than a foot before his face. She seemed to be considering, deliberately, the best way to end what should be a simple method of exterminating this helpless threat to her cubs. With a paw she rolled him over, again fortunately moving the deer's neck into a still more favourable position to protect Bill's face. She then began chewing his arm and shoulder, giving his head and chest an occasional rake with her claws, which tore his scalp and clothing into shreds and left him unconscious.

A bright morning sun was shining through the trees when Bill regained consciousness. He was too weak to move and too indifferent to care whether or not the bear had gone. At length he was aroused by three distant shots, a signal made in the north when one is lost, and by searching parties. Bill managed to reach his gun, fire three answering shots. Later he again heard the

signal, not so far away, to which he again replied. Soon there came shouts, voices; help was at hand.

They brought Bill into town, where we dressed seventy-six punctured wounds made by the bear's teeth, sutured sixteen deep lacerations, dressed innumerable scratches. Every wound was infected; one bone in his arm was broken into several fragments, yet in two weeks he was out of the hospital and in two or three months his arm had healed. Wabash Bill still lives in Alaska and still goes deer hunting occasionally, but never alone.

Not infrequently the will to live can be stimulated by something other than medicine, by something more powerful than the most potent drug. Of this fact there can be no doubt, yet I know of no explanation which demonstrates it with sufficient certainty to warrant its routine acceptance. We know some of medicine's effects and how they are produced, but we have not learned, precisely, how some non-medicinal agencies exert their curative effects.

One morning I was called to the cabin of Taku Jimmie, an Indian whom I knew to be in the last stages of pulmonary tuberculosis. Over a period of months, or possibly years, his lungs had become involved to such an extent there was little healthy tissue remaining. The night before calling me he had suffered the last of several hæmorrhages, which had reduced him to a state of complete exhaustion; his extreme emaciation, weak and rapid pulse, subnormal temperature, expression, and general condition were those of a man with but a few hours to live. I gave him some cough syrup containing a sedative and informed his wife the case was hopeless.

I had forgotten all about Jimmie when, nearly a year later, to my surprise, I met him on the street. He was still emaciated, but his step was lively, for an Indian, and his expression cheerful.

"For heaven's sake! I thought you were dead."

"Oh no, doctor, me no die. Me feel pretty good."

This was worth looking into. I took him to my office, pieced out the story. He said my medicine stopped his cough; next day a friend took him down to Sundum Charley, an Indian medicine man living about fifty miles from town. Charley had worked over him every day for a week before discovering the witch responsible for the sickness. The rest of it was simple enough for Sundum Charley. He used his strongest incantations, which, in two treat-

ments, not only drew the evil spirit from Jimmie's chest, but drove it back into the witch herself. Jimmie recovered, the witch became sick. A few months later she was drowned while crossing Chatham Straits in a canoe.

Following this miraculous spiritual transference, Taku Jimmie lived about two years, when he very definitely died in the Government Hospital of pulmonary tuberculosis.

THREE years later we moved across the channel to Juneau, then claiming a population of two thousand inhabitants. In appearance it differed in no important respects from Douglas or Wrangel, but having recently manœuvred the capital from Sitka it must follow the example of the poor and ambitious young woman trying determinedly to conceal her shabbiness beneath an imitation fur coat. Even the dance-halls assumed a quasi-respectability. Their patrons were cultivating nicer tastes in entertainment. No squaws were allowed; the girls were younger, better-looking, and wore longer skirts; some of them could really dance. Free-for-all fights were discouraged; when an incapacitated drunk was tossed into the street the city marshal trundled him home, or to jail, in a wheelbarrow.

Year by year we watched, and to some extent participated in, the transmutation of this small, ugly mining camp into a bustling little city, the capital of a domain in area one-fifth that of the continental United States. Its muddy streets were paved, two- and three-storied concrete buildings replaced its wretched shacks and false-front stores. The old Treadwell gold-mine caved in, but the Alaska-Juneau developed a bigger one at the edge of town. The Federal Government rediscovered Alaska, its neglected step-child, and while still dizzy with astonishment erected a million-dollar Capitol building, a large hospital for natives, a mile-long bridge across the channel. This called for modern apartment houses and an ultra-modern hotel, where second-generation pioneers could dunk their morning doughnuts at a mahogany counter, and of an afternoon gather with the ladies in a luxuriously appointed cocktail lounge. The poor but honest young woman had discarded her shoddy trappings for a genuine mink coat, with undergarments to match.

Alaska was emerging from her isolation; the hard, rough edges of our contacts with life were being rounded and softened, which tended to weaken and soften us. We still were pioneers, but we were no longer pioneering; a new type of Argonaut was venturing into the now famous Inside Passage, where quiet waters led

through magnificent scenery into a land of evil reputation but of undoubted opportunity. We, who had blazed a few trails and established a few outposts, were not insensible to improved means and appliances with which the harsh realities of existence could be cushioned; but increasing demands necessitated increased conveniences, giving rise to more demands, to be satisfied with newer conveniences. Somewhere within this ever-expanding cycle we lost certain qualities of resourcefulness and self-reliance which we were never quite able to recapture.

Tourists and big-game hunters were also discovering Alaska, among whom there was some curiosity as to the sort of men practising medicine in the outskirts of civilization. What misadventures had led us to pursue our vocation in such forbidding circumstances of deprivations and discomforts? Or were we, perhaps, the outcasts driven or crowded by moral or mental infirmities outside professional bounds? One could almost read these questions in their disapproving minds when they called and sized us up while talking down to us about the scenery, the Indians and, invariably, the climate.

As a matter of fact, we were at considerable disadvantage; there were doctors in the territory who had not been outside for years, and some, one regrets to admit, seemed unaware that institutions of post-graduate study existed, or that medical books and journals were still published. We were inclined to take on the colouring of our clientele, to dress comfortably, act naturally, and to be forthright in our speech and manner; most of us were less considerate of ourselves and our appearances than of our patients and their ailments.

But however accurately we may have personified the traditional Doc, to carry on with any degree of success and stand up under undivided responsibility for failures one simply had to know his stuff. And however crude our methods, there were occasions when we could stump the experts. I recall Dr. Thomas, a well-known Philadelphia urologist, who, having visited Alaska as a tourist, returned the following year as a bear-hunter. I knew the date he would arrive and had mapped his itinerary, engaged guides, made all preparations for a successful hunt; then in my own behalf sent an operative case to the hospital, a prostatectomy. This was an operation I disliked and could do only indifferently well; therefore I planned to improve my technique by watching and perhaps assisting a famed expert.

The boat got in late at night. I explained the situation to Dr. Thomas, who agreed to operate. Next morning in increasing dismay he appraised the hospital, the simply furnished operating-room, the few instruments, the inadequate operating-room personnel. Only two trained nurses were available, only one strange assistant of untried skill, myself. It was so vastly different from anything within his experience that he lost his nerve.

"Now, listen, doctor," said he, while we were scrubbing up, "this whole set-up is new to me; I'm accustomed to my own special table and instruments, to a corps of at least five assistants in the operating-room, with whom I have worked for years. We follow a carefully planned and scrupulously executed routine in which scarcely a word need be spoken. Every sponge and instrument is placed directly in my hand, my every move is anticipated. Now you go ahead and operate on this man your way, and I'll assist you."

Heretofore we had relatively few patients whose ailments and disabilities were not clearly manifest. Our practice was made up largely of wounds and injuries due to external violence, exposure to the elements, nutritional disorders and their complications, along with diseases and constitutional defects recently brought into the territory. Functional diseases among the old-timers were rare; neurotics had something more vital and pressing to worry about than their neuroses. But changes were creeping in upon us, stresses and strains on overwrought nerves and overworked bodies were taking their tolls. I recall a middle-aged, high-pressure executive not long in the country who came into the office complaining of a peculiar pain in his chest. While I was reaching for my stethoscope he stopped talking, clutched at his shoulder, then froze into immobility, while a ghastly expression of pain and alarm spread across his face. An instant later he collapsed to the floor, and I had a rare opportunity to hear the last faint sounds of a heart stopping irremediably by a coronary occlusion.

Two ambitious society leaders suffered nervous breakdowns; nervous indigestion began puzzling us; I saw several cases of undoubted illness in which the cause was obscure, others in which it was decidedly physical and relevant, but indirect.

Over a period of months I had treated Mrs. Brown's indigestion, intestinal cramps, nausea, gradual loss of appetite and weight, with nothing better than transitory success. The most painstaking

examinations gave no indication of organic disease, yet there were times when she was seriously ill. Her recovery was immediate and complete when her husband, an elderly and pious gentleman, finally discharged his private secretary, a sultry young brunette.

Scarlet fever appeared, and typhoid, and I saw my first case of diphtheria. Four years later, in Nome, the first epidemic of that dread disease was reported; as Territorial Commissioner of Health, it was my job to have a half-million units of antitoxin delivered to the stricken town. Midwinter storms were raging over the northland, with temperatures down to minus forty degrees or more. There was only a few thousand units of serum in the territory; a supply must be ordered from Seattle. This was shipped to Fairbanks, repacked against freezing, and carried from there to Nome by relays of dog-teams travelling day and night over unmarked trails. The trip was made in a few hours less than five days, an all-time record. Regular dog-team mail service between Fairbanks and Nome then required three weeks; the regular time by plane is now seven hours.

The hospital doubled its capacity, giving us four wards, twenty private rooms, eighty beds. We now had a fully equipped laboratory and X-ray department, an up-to-date surgery, a corps of well-trained nurses. Alaska's real pioneers were the Sisters of St. Ann. Long before the gold-rush, when the country was thought to be a frozen, ice-bound wilderness, these devoted and indefatigable trail-blazers were establishing mission schools and rudimentary hospitals where those who followed later could find healing care and sanctuary. Necessarily, these Sisters possessed qualities of courage and adaptability far above the average, and an inflexibility of principle and purpose which could not be broken, nor even bent. Through many years of close association I came to realize this fact and to govern myself accordingly.

On several occasions during the course of abdominal operations I had ventured to ligate the Fallopian tubes, upon what was to me justifiable grounds, but forbidden by hospital rules. I thought then and still believe situations arise wherein a woman may rightfully decide whether or not she should be sterilized. The operation is safe and easy and was performed unobtrusively, unnoticed by the operating-room Sister, intent on other matters. But finally, as must inevitably happen, I was caught red-handed, and as a consequence spent an uncomfortable half-hour in the Superior's office, making explanations which explained nothing

whatever to her satisfaction. After admonishing me sternly, the interview ended, and our cordial relations were resumed.

Due to a contracted pelvis, a Mrs. Smith had had a very difficult labour, following which the baby had died of a birth injury. A year later, when she again became pregnant, I told her a Cæsarian section offered the only assurance of a live baby. A family consultation was held; it was decided that a child would be well worth the risks. But dreading a repetition of what was then considered a dangerous operation, Mrs. Smith and her mother urged me to make future pregnancies impossible; to do so would prolong the operation only a few minutes. Remembering the Superior's warning, I agreed, reluctantly.

Mrs. Smith reached term in excellent condition; the operation proceeded uneventfully. I handed the baby to a nurse, tied one tube and was tying the other when a Sister, peering into the abdomen, discovered what I was doing. She looked up in pained surprise.

"Doctor, are you sterilizing this woman?"

"Yes, Sister."

"But you know very well you can't do that in this hospital."

"Yes, Sister, but it's already done. It wouldn't be safe to continue the anæsthetic while I try to undo it."

When she gave an angry grunt and marched stiffly from the room I knew I was in for trouble. Downstairs I met the Superior. She, too, was angry; her habitually calm expression revealed disappointment and condemnation as she led the way to her office. Standing with her back to the door, she eyed me coldly.

"Why did you sterilize that woman?" she asked, her voice frosty.

I stated the case to the best of my ability, but her foot tapping the floor impatiently indicated I was making no great impression. And yet there was something indefinable in her bearing that told me she understood. When I had exhausted the subject and was searching for something to add, she stepped aside.

"You know our rules," said she. "Neither you nor I can change them, and I wouldn't if I could. Please don't do that again."

I never did.

On March 6th, 1920, I delivered my nine hundred and ninety-ninth baby. No doctor then in Alaska had come anywhere near equalling that record; therefore my next maternity case, my one

thousandth, seemed to call for something in the way of special acknowledgment.

My records showed a baby due on or about March 10th, two others on the 13th. In the absence of any inspiration pointing to a more appropriate gesture, I decided to charge no fee for attending my next confinement; then in a burst of enthusiasm enlarged my decision to include the expense of hospitalization. This would bring the total cost of my gift to around two hundred dollars.

Of the three probable contestants for this niche in my private hall of fame, I rather hoped Mrs. Brown, a charming young woman whose husband worked in a bank, would win; to surprise them with a cost-free first-born would be a real pleasure. Yet there was something to be said in favour of Mrs. Black, a miner's wife, whose husband had already paid me in full for two husky infants; while Mrs. White, with one under-nourished two-year-old and a husband chronically indisposed towards a steady job, was more deserving. Moreover, in her case the actual loss to me would be less, since the chances of White paying anything at all were slim.

Shortly after midnight on March 9th, Mrs. Brown called me. She was due next day, and there were the usual indications of labour's imminence. I took her to the hospital; then, finding she had made little progress, I went back to bed. "Lucky girl," I thought, "there's an agreeable surprise coming to you."

But later that same morning Mrs. White came to the office. She was not due until the 13th, but unpredictable forces were interceding for her; evidently there was to be some competition for my prize. As she was indubitably in labour I sent her to the hospital. Throughout the day I watched them closely; the race was running neck and neck, with the Superior and her staff, who knew my intentions, rooting quietly for Mrs. White, while I still favoured Mrs. Brown.

That evening while at dinner I was called to the phone. The Sister was non-committal in her statement as to which was leading, but her demand was imperative that I come to the delivery room at once, immediately! At the hospital it was clear from the Superior's twinkling eyes that Mrs. Brown and I were losing out; the commotion upstairs made it equally clear there was no time to waste in inquiries. But why all the giggling? I wondered, as I hurriedly scrubbed my hands, slipped on a gown and stepped into the delivery room in the very nick of time to receive the baby.

"Well, Mrs. White," I said a moment later, cheerfully and sincerely, "you have a fine baby boy. I'm sorry they didn't call me earlier, but everything's all right and you haven't a thing in the world to worry about. And I've a nice surprise waiting for you."

More giggles from the nurses. The heavily draped figure on the table before me stirred slightly, pushed back the sheets and raised her head inquiringly. She was Mrs. Tanaka, the wife of a Japanese fisherman. As was her custom in two previous confinements, she had made no arrangements for the slight inconvenience of having another baby, but rushed to the hospital at the last moment. People around town got a far bigger kick out of this incident than did the Tanakas, who were unable to appreciate the circumstances of my generosity.

My two thousandth baby, also a boy, was commemorated inexpensively on June 2nd, 1933, by bestowing on him my name.

Medicine has its wreaths of laurel no less than its heavy crosses, but they are not equally conspicuous. Our failures, or grim reminders of them, speak for themselves with the voices of many tongues, but the intimate, personal and confidential nature of medical service is such that, when it succeeds, the wreaths bestowed are often clad in silent obscurity. Like many another, I could not point with pride to some of my better accomplishments, nor even acknowledge them; they were of a kind one keeps locked in the deepest recesses of the mind.

One of these concerned the daughter of a highly placed official newly appointed to an important public office; it was hoped that an entire change of scene and renewed activities in new surroundings would comfort the sorrow occasioned by his wife's recent death. This had left him with an only child, then about twenty years of age, who with an elderly housekeeper accompanied him to the territory.

One evening shortly after they arrived the young lady came to my office complaining of what she said must be indigestion. It was nothing serious, she assured me, and she hoped I would say nothing to her father about it; he always worried over her slightest indispositions. At a dinner-party the night before she showed no signs of illness, so I gave her a mild laxative and advised a little more rest and sleep. But in a few days she was back; the medicine had upset her stomach.

I gave her another prescription; in two days she marched in with an air of determination, which slowly deserted her during a brief examination, followed by a few general questions. There were tears in her eyes as she arose, stood beside the door and sought a handkerchief.

This was the first clue to an extremely delicate situation, but one hesitates to suspect young ladies of her type and station of indiscretions, nor does one inquire deeply into that possibility except with extreme wariness; a mistake would never be forgiven.

"Have you any reason to be worrying about anything?" I asked her, with a slight emphasis on the pronoun.

She shook her head, but kept her face averted while dabbing at her eyes with the handkerchief.

"If you have," I continued, "you must tell me. Sometimes we are alarmed without reason, and sometimes, when we have cause for apprehension, we put off doing anything about it until it's too late."

I was on the right track. The flood-gates of her tears gave way and she cried bitterly. When the storm abated she told me the old but always moving story. Several days before she and her father left Virginia for the north she had gone, with a young man to whom she was tentatively engaged, to a farewell party. There had been some drinking, to which she was unaccustomed. Upon returning home they found the housekeeper in bed; her father was in Washington. One thing led to another; her remembrance of all that happened was not clear, but she recalled enough to keep her in a turmoil of remorse, to which was now added anxiety and desperation.

I attempted to reassure her. "This is very definitely something to worry about, but it's not unique nor is it necessarily disastrous. The first thing for you to do is to tell your father all about it, just as you told me. You should then arrange to go back and marry that man—the sooner the better. When the baby comes your doctor will announce that it is a month or so premature, and no one will ever be the wiser."

"But I'm not going to have a baby," she replied firmly, "and I shall not tell Dad. He hasn't been at all well since Mother died; this shock would be more than he could bear. And I'm certainly not going to ask Fred to marry me; I should say not! The idea! Suppose he refused?" She considered a moment. "I know that

people do take medicine for this sort of thing; if you can't or won't give it to me I know exactly what to do, I'll drown myself in the channel."

I liked her spirit, but I disliked the calm determination in her voice and manner; desperation does occasionally drive girls of her calibre to extreme measures.

"Don't be silly. There isn't any medicine strong enough to help you without risk of landing you in the hospital. The nurses would know what was wrong with you; they would have an interesting bit of gossip to whisper to their friends, who would spread it throughout the territory. This is a risk you can't afford to take.

"You could, of course, jump off the dock," I continued impartially. "That would be an easy way out of it, for you, but how about your father, who you say couldn't bear knowing that his only daughter gave way to a brief instinctive impulse? For you may be sure he would learn the bare facts, but without any extenuating circumstances. Eventually your body would be found, an autopsy would be ordered by the court, the reason for your suicide would become a matter of public record. That indeed might kill him."

She sat staring at the floor; when she spoke her voice had lost its firmness. "But what shall I do?"

"Just this: go home and try to decide what you would advise a friend to do if she were in your situation. It may help you to know that I can probably talk to your father about it more effectively than can you, and that I'll be glad to write to your Fred in a way he will understand if he's the kind of man you should marry. But whatever else you do, don't talk to anyone about this, not a word. Not even a hint or question bearing on the subject. Some women, as you may not know, are keenly intuitive in these matters."

She came back next day, still unable to reconcile herself to the idea of confiding in her father, but willing for me to write to Fred. By return mail she received an urgent proposal of marriage; she left town on the next boat for Virginia, where they were married. With her husband she returned to Alaska shortly before the baby was born, and no one, including her father, questioned my assertion that it was at least two months premature

IN a new and isolated community where its diverse elements are still in a state of flux the grist finding its way to the general practitioner's mill comes to him in the raw, without having been sorted for kind or quality. Most of it is good, and portions are perhaps questionable or even worthless, but whether good, bad or indifferent, he must grind it all with skill and patience; there is no better mill available to which it can be sent.

In terms of disabilities, he knows some of them are beyond his aid, and others not worth the effort spent in remedying them, and he often wonders why the desire to have them remedied is so strong and persistent where life has so little to offer. I recall a badly wounded murderer whom I kept alive for months, that he might be executed by the state with due and brutal formality, and another who, having nothing discernible to live for, died of nothing less than unreasoning fear of death. Others die because they fear to live.

Shortly after the gold-rush, James Black came down from the interior to settle in our midst, bringing with him a young wife, a pleasing personality, a soft southern drawl, and considerable cash he had made in mining ventures up around Dawson. Presently he began clerking in a lawyer's office; within a year he had passed the examination and was admitted to the bar, and soon had built up a lucrative practice. A number of men about town had known him in Dawson and spoke well of him; his wife was a friendly girl whom everyone liked; they soon occupied prominent places in the community.

I knew him well over a period of many years: a slightly built, modest and very able man with a shock of white hair contrasting strongly against heavy black brows and deep, soulful brown eyes, which at times seemed to be probing the world's most grievous tragedies. Shrewd, but never sly, genial, but not jovial, a loyal friend, devoted husband and father, he gained and held the respect of all who knew him.

For several years Mrs. Black and their daughter Ruth, a puny child then about eight years of age, had spent a part of each winter

in Florida. Although she and I had conspired often against her husband's distaste for travelling, we could never persuade him to accompany the family on these winter vacations; the north, he affirmed, was his home, the scenery and even the climate were arranged especially for his enjoyment. Fishing trips of a summer and deer-hunting in winter were all the vacations he cared for and would undertake.

One February, while the family was in Florida, Black received a telegram from his wife telling of Ruth's serious illness, urging him to come at once. We noticed nothing unusual about his hurried preparations for departure, nothing more than a certain tight-lipped grimness with which he arranged his affairs against any possible contingency, even to the extent of placing his property in his wife's name and appointing an administrator to carry out his wishes should he not return.

Fortunately, Ruth's illness ended in recovery; in a month Black returned, but with a startling change in his expression and demeanour. Years, seemingly, had been added to his age, giving him the appearance of a stooped, haggard and furtive old man encrusted with hate and suspicion, entirely foreign to the Jimmie Black we had known so well.

Several days later he came to the office to ask if old scars could be removed. I gave him little encouragement except to say they might be changed, or perhaps made less conspicuous, depending on their size and location. Next day Black was found in bed unconscious, but still breathing; that night he died without regaining consciousness. It seemed to be a case of narcotic poisoning, but there was no known motive, and as there was no proof to the contrary, the report around town that he had died of a stroke was not denied. But upon examining the body I found the letter G, followed by the figures 307, evidently having been burned deeply into the flesh over the sacrum many years before and now dimly visible against the discoloured skin.

The mystery of James Black was never solved officially. Mrs. Black came home, arranged her affairs, returned to her former home in Dawson. Several weeks later a sheriff from Georgia came through the territory looking for an escaped prisoner named Carlson Wells, convicted of murder nearly twenty years previously and sentenced to life imprisonment. Wells had escaped, was captured, but again escaped; a report had reached the sheriff that he was living in Alaska under an assumed name. His photo-

graph and description did, in fact, bear some slight resemblance to James Black.

A large percentage of the skeletons locked in a doctor's case-records are kept from rattling, but not all of them. I am thinking of Smith, a prominent business man whom I had thought I knew well for more than twenty years. Gradually he commenced acting queerly, becoming progressively more careless of his appearance, more erratic in the conduct of his affairs; his judgment was no longer sure, his memory failed, he suffered periods of undue elation followed by weeks of deepest dejection. Smith's strange conduct was attributed by his friends to any number of causes far removed from the true one, which I finally learned was a long-neglected syphilitic infection.

An only son, then a medical student spending his second-year vacation at home, was alarmed by the change in his father's condition, which I explained as probably due to overwork and worry amounting to a general physical and mental breakdown. It was serious, I said, but not necessarily hopeless; with care there was a possibility of at least partial recovery.

Throughout the winter Smith grew steadily worse; by spring he was unmanageable; we were forced to send him outside to a sanatorium, where he soon died. The cause of death was given as paresis. The son came home, learned of the report, realized that paresis is practically always a terminal manifestation of syphilis. Having studied medicine, he also realized that I was justified in keeping his father's secret, although it seemed to hold ominous potentialities.

Blood tests were not then available in Alaska; the presence of this protean scourge when it was latent, or masked, could not always be proved or disproved. Young Smith also knew this, and that the disease may occasionally be transmitted from father to offspring without apparent effect on the mother. Was she infected? I assured him there was no evidence of it. Could he by any possibility have inherited it from his father? I called his attention to the fact that I had known him since the moment of his birth, that I had looked after him more or less ever since, and that no one better than I knew there was not the slightest cause for anxiety on that score. What I could not tell him was something that no one but his mother and I knew—that, in fact, Smith was not his father.

But when once lodged in an imaginative mind, a dread suspicion is not easily dislodged. It was so with young Smith; he searched himself continuously for symptoms fitting into the pattern of syphilis, as he understood it, and as is not unusual in such cases, he had no difficulty in finding them. The idea became a consuming obsession. Every few days he came to my office complaining of vague pains and aches, irregularities and peculiar sensations, invisible eruptions, many of which I could dispel only to have them replaced by others. Within a year he was a chronic and probably incurable syphilophobe.

It was a strange and tragic story, and now that Smith was dead no one but I knew both sides of it. A year or so after their marriage Smith and his wife had quarrelled bitterly; he sought forgetfulness in drink, his wife went home to her mother. While still angry, resentful and desperately unhappy, she had spent a night with a young man to whom she was formerly engaged. A few days later her husband, driven by remorse, had sent for her, a reconciliation was effected which endured until his death; but each had suffered irreparable harm: he had contracted syphilis, and before reaching home his wife discovered that she was pregnant.

The situation was not conducive to mutual confidences; she could muster no plausible excuse for returning to the States, where she might have procured an abortion, and I could do nothing for her but advise telling her husband the truth. She refused flatly to do this; the baby was born; Smith never suspected its parentage.

Not until twenty years later, when he was developing paresis, did Smith admit to me the possibility of syphilis. He had attempted to treat himself and had thought himself cured; and now a cruel retribution was catching up with his widow. She was forced to choose between two equally distressing alternatives: by confessing to her son that Smith was not his father she could free the lad's mind of a devastating complex that was wrecking his career, or by remaining silent she could keep his respect and affection. When I last knew the Smiths she was still holding on to her son's respect, but he had given up medicine and was a mucker in the mine.

Grievous disorders are often cured by remedies not found in any pharmacopœia, nor are they recommended by medical authority. An instance of this is recalled in the case of Walter

Brown. For many years Walter had tried to rid himself of an affliction for which I could prescribe no cure; cheerfully at first, then patiently against increasing provocation, then sullenly in the knowledge of certain defeat. A quiet, serious-minded young man, thoroughly domesticated in a small mid-western village, he had come north to work in his uncle's bank, advancing later to the position of cashier. It was shortly thereafter that Alice White emerged from her brief mourning, sheathed her claws and began stalking her prey in a manner wholly irresistible to a man of Walter's inexperience.

I had known Alice in another part of the territory when, as a child, her ungovernable temper and unbelievable tantrums resisted everything known in medicine, including a shot of apomorphine, commonly used in subduing the violently insane. Yet she developed into a rather handsome young woman and found a husband in Billy White, an inoffensive little chap, who dealt with her abnormal emotional explosions by the simple expedient of sending for me and hiding out until the storm abated. Unfortunately, Billy died within a year of an accidental bullet wound, leaving Alice all but destitute; therefore when she married Walter Brown she drew my congratulations and Walter my best wishes.

There was some hope that the coming of Alice's babies would change her disposition, which it did, but the change was for the worse: in addition to frequent outbursts of hysterical temper, she alternated complaining martyrdom with sulky jealousy. Walter's habitual calmness was attributed by Alice to lack of feeling, his generosity to a guilty conscience: when he ventured to disagree with her he was obstinate; when he remained silent he was inattentive; if he fell in with her moods and whims it was with an ulterior motive. His patience seemed to be without limit, but the abrasive effect of her constant nagging gradually wore him down; at thirty he bore the imprints of fifty, while Alice, a true parasite, thrived mightily.

Walter had been married seven years when his uncle died, leaving him ten thousand dollars. One evening a few weeks later he came to the house with a quicker step than usual and an unholy gleam in his mild blue eyes, but his voice was as calm and precise as though he were stating the terms of a prospective loan. At long last the worm had very definitely turned and was on the offensive. Without her knowledge he had drawn a thousand dollars from the

bank for himself and had transferred the balance to Alice; he had then gone home, given her what he modestly called a thrashing, and was on his way to the wharf to catch a boat then in port bound for Kodiak, about a thousand miles to the westward. He planned to be gone indefinitely—in fact, it was his intention to keep going to the end of transportation if she followed him.

Without attempting to dissuade him, I agreed to carry out his instructions, which were to dress Alice's wounds and keep him informed respecting the children's health. At the house I discovered that what Walter referred to as a thrashing was nothing less than a very complete overhauling, in the process of which he had plastered her face and body with innumerable bruises. No badly mauled pugilist was ever carried from the ring bearing more convincing evidence of having been in a fight, and no shrewish housewife was ever more thoroughly and lastingly tamed.

To this day I have not been able to free my mind of a slight suspicion that I may have been, by omission, *particeps criminis* to a murder. During the development of a new gold-mine near town we experienced many thrills and throes incidental to a boom: strangers swarmed in from all parts of the country, new enterprises were established, the town doubled its population in a summer. Among the pleasing-to-the-eye innovations of the period was Belle Green, a striking blonde, built somewhat on the order of a light tank, but with graceful curves, large wondering blue eyes, and lips inviting close scrutiny, if not contact. She came up from Seattle, but her voice and bearing were of the deep south, and she let it be known that she was a lady, bent on seeing the world from the viewpoint of an under-privileged working girl. To that end she accepted a position as cashier in the Chichagoff Hotel dining-room, where she held forth each day from early lunch through dinner. Popular and circumspect, she soon acquired a string of admirers, but the line between friendliness and familiarity was pointed out with tact or bluntness as the occasion warranted.

Judson Brown was one of our most obdurate and impervious bachelors, then in his late forties. Rustic, vulgar and artless of women, he had stumbled upon a fortune in the Klondike, made a tour of the States, was held up and robbed in Chicago, and returned to Alaska with a mild case of diabetes and a determination to live out his days in peace and security after his own fashion. This contemplated nothing more exciting than a corner room in

the hotel, sleeping until eleven o'clock, making the most of his restricted diet, playing solo at the Elks' club of an afternoon, and a picture show in the evening.

Despite his affliction, or possibly because of it, his money had made him the objective of much feminine strategy, doomed to failure by reason of faulty tactics. For Judson, while by no means insensible to womanly charms, was dull, unimaginative and painfully bashful, and could not bring himself to respond to the indirect approach. Belle's methods were discreet but ingenuous and highly provocative; before her intentions were clear to Judson he had fallen under a hypnotic spell from which he was aroused to find himself married.

Contrary to predictions, Belle was even more attentive after the wedding than during her pre-marital raid on Judson's celibacy. He bought her a house out the road that he might enjoy some privacy and Belle indulge her culinary artistry. I wrote out orders covering her husband's diet and medication, which she promised to observe scrupulously.

A few weeks later Judson sent for me; he was losing weight and feeling wretched, and Belle, I discovered, was stuffing him with practically every article on the forbidden list, prepared and served in a most appetizing manner. Her excuse was his objection to being starved, yet I had had him on the same diet for more than a year and had heard no complaints. I again explained the absolute necessity of following instructions; the certainty of disastrous results if she continued tempting him with improper food.

Belle came in occasionally to report progress, but when I called I found my advice had again gone unheeded. It then occurred to me that more was behind this peculiar situation than appeared on the surface. Gross stupidity combined with blind devotion could account for such negligence, or worse, but Belle was not stupid. Nor was she the type to fall recklessly in love with a rich old man. Brown continued losing weight and strength; in a short time he fell into a diabetic coma from which he never rallied. In his will he left everything he possessed to his wife, amounting to about fifty thousand dollars.

Before leaving town she came in to pay my bill, and in reply to my regrets over the unfortunate outcome, observed accusingly: "Poor Judson was too weak to stand your starving; if your medicine had been as good as my cooking he would not have died."

THE average tourist making a round trip to Alaska knows next to nothing about the country, because what he sees is infinitesimal in relation to the whole, and what he learns is so often inexact or untrue. In south-eastern Alaska, where tourists flock of a summer by thousands, when it is not raining the sky is apt to be overcast, the air chilly, the sea a monotonous dull grey. Alluring islands are obscured by mists or fogs; pleasant bays and deep mysterious fiords and inlets appear as mere indentations in a distant coastline. The towns are small, drab, rain-soaked, unlovely; the inhabitants unimpressive.

The very word Alaska connotes ice and snow, reindeer, igloos, frozen solitudes, gold, furs and salmon, all of which are present in their several localities. Few of us realize, however, that in the coastal areas for a distance of two thousand miles beyond the southern boundary the climate is remarkably free from extremes of heat or cold. One may add that cyclones and tornadoes, floods, forest fires, highwaymen, bank failures and depressions are unknown; that gigolos, beggars, millionaires, earthquakes, thunder and lightning are rare and innocuous; that traffic jams and overcrowding are worries for future consideration. At the present time Alaska's sixty-odd thousand inhabitants have more than nine square miles each of standing room.

It was our good fortune to be present when this remote, neglected liability was converted into a rich asset of great industrial, and perhaps of vital military, importance. We saw the country emerge from its isolation, change from a little-known District into an efficiently organized Territory clamouring for statehood. Telegraphic, telephone and radio communications were established; fishing boats operated by sails or steam installed internal combustion motors; steamship routes were surveyed, marked and charted, trails widened into highways; snowshoes and dog-teams gave way to automobiles and aeroplanes, candles and lamps to electricity, trading posts to department stores.

It is unlikely that in any other place or period of American expansion could a greater transformation have been witnessed

in so short a time. We saw our so-called under-privileged discover an alternative to working in the rain and going on relief; our so-called over-privileged cut wages, raise prices, hire more lawyers; our uncivilized, self-supporting natives converted into educated citizens incapable of surviving without Government aid. We had prided ourselves in being able to live off the country when necessary, but the problem of keeping others from living off us was growing more and still more vexing. One must be realistic; one must keep in step with the times. We employed more peace officers, enacted more laws, constructed larger jails, built bigger and better houses; we talked learnedly of stock markets, bought South American bonds, discarded our flannel shirts, engaged a maid, dressed for dinner, and all but ruined our digestion.

We could still take it, but we no longer pretended to like it. Even the sports we loved were losing their appeal. Cruising on our old *Chirikov* among the islands was slow, tiresome and none too comfortable; we decided on a larger boat. We went trout-fishing and were bitten by mosquitoes, ran out of the food we liked, fell into the river and caught colds; we went moose-hunting, rolled up in a bearskin robe spread on the snow, shivered through a sleepless night, turned back next morning. At all hours on hundreds of occasions I had faced sub-zero blizzards afoot in response to calls, but walking was now a hateful, unnecessary ordeal; while there were still no more than nine miles of streets and roads upon which it could be driven, I must have a car.

My first automobile bore an intriguing licence plate, Alaska-2, which gave rise to several anxious moments when I shipped it to Seattle and drove to New York. Though I had never driven in traffic and was unfamiliar with its laws and regulations, the trip presented no great difficulties. In fact, there was nothing to it. Proceeding leisurely over the southern route, we passed through the smaller cities in the early morning hours, skirted Washington and Baltimore, negotiated the Holland Tunnel, headed up Sixth Avenue one Saturday morning about eleven o'clock. Never had I believed the city I thought I knew so well could be so nerve-racking: a narrow street, two surface railways, an elevated, dozens of honking taxis, hundreds of rumbling trucks, thousands of quite mad pedestrians, all seemingly bent on saluting the first Alaska car they had seen.

It was tough going. After two weeks of quiet country driving the racket was deafening. In every block someone hopped on the

running-board to have a look at the Eskimos, to ask questions I had neither time nor disposition to answer. At Thirty-third Street a mounted policeman edged us over to the curb, dismounted, rested his arms on the door while looking us over.

"So you're from Alaska, hunh? Long way from home, I'd say." His voice rasped ominously, serving to open my pores for a flow of clammy perspiration. "Where you goin'?"

Murmuring something about the City Club on Forty-fourth Street, I tried to look unconcerned. But I had no driver's licence—such protective measures had not yet reached Alaska—nor had I a certificate of car ownership. In the north none was necessary. Worse still, in the back of the car was a two-gallon keg of Kentucky "corn," picked up at a moonshiner's cabin near Jenkinsville. It was guaranteed to be nearly two years old, and it was my intention to distribute small bottles of the precious elixir, suitably labelled, to my friends back home at Christmas-time.

In the circumstances neither my wife nor I was possessed of much composure as the officer fished in a pocket, began scribbling on a card. In those days of "Noble Experiment" the discovery of my contraband would certainly lead to complications.

"All right, Skipper," said the officer, finally. "Straight ahead about ten blocks, then turn right. An' send me a pretty postcard when you get back to Alaska, will you? I'm making a collection."

We returned home without serious mishap. I mailed the policeman his postcard. The keg remained in the car inviolate throughout the trip, its contents presumably mellowed by four or five thousand miles of agitation. One evening shortly before Christmas a few special friends came in to help prepare my gifts, but only one man in town, a native of Georgia, could drink the stuff or even stand its sour smell.

Alaskans have long been noted for hospitality. Alexander Baranof, the first Russian Governor-General, was known from Boston to Kronstadt for the magnificence with which he entertained. Some of the banquets he gave in honour of visiting personages lasted several days, ending only when his guests were sated with food and Aleut girls, and many of them carried aboard their ships. Later-day Alaskans valiantly attempted to carry on certain parts of the tradition, with considerable success; probably nowhere were presentable strangers greeted more cordially, accepted more readily and more quickly made to sense their

welcome. Among Alaskans themselves, the open house and informality were sacred duties, house parties their simplest expression.

Someone is bored momentarily of an evening, any evening. He steps to the phone. "Hello, this is Bill. Any use coming over?"

"Certainly. Wait a minute; sure. Come on over and bring something for sandwiches."

One's wife steps to the phone, calls mutual friends. Within an hour the house is in something of an uproar. Some incline to bridge, others to penny ante, gossip, the radio, close-order dancing in the crowded living-room. Around midnight a supper, or sometimes breakfast, is served; the party breaks up; one gets a little sleep.

But strict formality is also present on occasion, when everyone turns out in tux or tails, gowns from Seattle and New York. Fun then waits on decorum. We make a very creditable showing even though we realize that beauty lies in the beholder's eyes; that mankind is most concerned with its private interests.

This was brought to mind amusingly upon a very famous surgeon's visit to Alaska. After dinner, I having a date with a stork at the hospital, my wife urged our guest to attend a rather swanky Masonic ball; he would there see us at our best.

Our guest was genuinely impressed as he viewed the brilliantly lighted ballroom, the colourful crowd. My wife turned to him expectantly.

"You'll admit, doctor," she challenged him, "this isn't the Alaska of Jack London and Rex Beach."

But he was insensible to the catchy music, beautiful costumes and well-turned-out men, to everything in which she was taking pride; his eyes were riveted on a commanding figure across the hall, his nostrils fairly twitching. "My God!" he exclaimed. "Why doesn't someone take out that woman's goitre?"

Prior to 1913, all laws operative in Alaska were enacted by the Congress in Washington. Our political life began the preceding year when we were granted a modicum of home rule, and authorized to select a legislative body to meet for two months every two years. It was given limited jurisdiction over various departments of public welfare and education, but Washington kept a hand on the country's natural resources.

The first session of our Legislature was a historic event in which

everyone in town sought to participate, actively or in an advisory capacity. Incipient law-makers straggled into the capital, their heads stuffed with ideas and their pockets with Bills, designed to correct mistakes and injustices perpetrated by an indifferent and allegedly incompetent bureaucratic Government.

It was a strange, earnest and uninhibited assemblage of talent such as our forefathers knew but our children may never hope to see, each member determined to do something about something, and each handicapped by the familiarity that breeds irreverence. At that time everyone of prominence in Alaska was known throughout the territory, and the knowledge was apt to be extremely personal, dating back to the day of one's arrival in the country. His occupation, reputation, domestic and marital condition, how and where he made his money, if any, were discussed with great candour; his reaction to political preferment was watched with interest and pride, disapproval, tolerance or perhaps amusement. What he said and did after election were compared mercilessly with what he was before and had promised to do, which counselled prudence and deliberation.

Parties, dances, receptions and hangovers, combined with an inadequate meeting-place and vain search for a copy of Roberts' "Rules of Order," tended to cool the legislative zeal. Closer study disclosed that the territory's need for additional schools was not so pressing as the demand for territorial jobs, forthwith created. Most of the laboriously thought out remedies for Federal misrule were found to be impracticable; all of them were expensive; every suggested measure of improvement infringed on someone's existing rights.

The Legislature had been given powers of taxation, but no one wanted to be taxed; friendly, soft-spoken strangers swamped the law-makers with reasons why mines and canneries, the only important sources of revenue, should not be taxed, why they should, instead, be commended for having developed the country's resources.

There were more consultations, parties and hangovers. It was decided that Federal Bureaus must be tolerated for the present. A few constructive but inexpensive measures were passed, and many resounding Memorials and Resolutions setting forth the country's needs were forwarded to Washington.

The question of what to do about Alaska's greatest industry, salmon-canning, remains a vexing problem to this day; how to

win and hold fishermen's votes while approximating the limit of control and taxation of canneries, without overstepping the limit of safety, still comes up at every session of the Territorial Legislature.

In 1922, when President Harding visited Alaska, his Secretary of Commerce, Herbert Hoover, gave us a new slant on the situation as it looked from Washington. A meeting was arranged at which representatives of the canners, fishermen and the territory were invited to air their views and grievances. The room was packed with lobbyists and spectators; with brisk directness Mr. Hoover began by requiring each of the interested parties to choose a spokesman. Time was limited. After a short parley our Senator Black and two others stepped forward.

The Secretary had met Black and knew all the political angles; therefore he turned to the next in line, a prominent lawyer.

"Whom do you represent?" he inquired.

After considerable hedging, the man admitted being employed by the canneries.

"And you, sir?" the other man was asked.

"I'm speaking for the poor fishermen, Mr. Secretary, all living right here in the territory."

"Very well, gentlemen; I represent the poor fish, which, as you may recall, belong to the whole United States. Now let's get down to business."

Nothing of lasting benefit came of the meeting, but it was made clear that Alaska had not been given in trust for the use of Alaskans exclusively.

Not often is one privileged to spend an informal evening in the company of a President of the United States. Following a reception in the Governor's Mansion, a dozen or more Federal and Territorial officials gathered in the smoking-room, where the President lounged in a big easy-chair, completely at ease and, as he put it, envious of Governor Bone's position and freedom from worry. Though he assured us the trip north was delightful and had done him a world of good, he was obviously a very sick man, weary, careworn, and in the light of later developments perhaps disillusioned.

We sampled his cigarettes and offered ours in return, the conversation centring around Alaska's scenery, its mild yet bracing climate and general healthfulness. He was especially interested in its timber resources, agricultural possibilities, and in the feasibility

of extending a railroad across British Columbia into the interior of the territory, where, he said sadly, nothing would please him more than to spend the summer. Had he lived, it is quite likely this railroad would have been promoted and built long before its need became so great in a then unforeseen national emergency.

AMONG the first Acts of the Alaska Legislature two were of especial interest to me: one providing for registration of births, deaths and marriages, the other creating a Territorial Board of Medical Examiners, of which I served as Secretary for twenty years. This law closed the last open door to unrestricted medical practice within the jurisdiction of the United States. Only eighteen doctors then practising in the territory were found to be eligible for licence under the new law's provisions, all of them general practitioners, and all qualified to render acceptable medical service. We were now in position to organize an Alaska Medical Society and apply for recognition by the National Association. This was probably the smallest unit ever accepted by that body as a component part.

The amiable controversy existing between general practitioner and specialist, kept alive by a misguided public's vain search for the superlative, was unknown in Alaska. That it should not exist anywhere is attested by Dr. Hugh Cabot in his book "The Patient's Dilemma." Dr. Cabot writes: "Eighty-five per cent. of the diseases for which patients consult doctors are of a type which the modern general practitioner can handle in a satisfactory manner."

Inferentially, the remaining fifteen per cent. should have the benefit of special treatment. But as approximately half of them are admittedly incurable, the specialist's efficiency quotient in so far as cures are concerned is reduced by about fifty per cent. I think any fair-minded general practitioner will admit cheerfully that seven, or even eight, per cent. is about the right proportion of illness and injuries requiring specialized treatment.

The public, however, has been taught to demand much more in this respect than it requires, and to refer the consequent expensiveness to the high cost of medical care, rather than to the cost of non-essentials. It has been told, and many quarters prefer to believe, that to keep the human mechanism in running order is not a one-man job; that if satisfactory results are to be expected it must be taken to the assembly line of a modern clinic,

where each of its parts and functions is relegated to a skilled mechanic. As a clinic's standing is measured largely by the number and diversity of its specialists, who devote their study to increasingly smaller parts, the inevitable outcome of this practice, if carried to its logical conclusion, is obvious: the future doctor will have learned more and more about less and less until he comes to know everything about nothing. The curious spectacle of a dog not only being wagged by his tail, but led around by that comparatively superfluous member, will then be commonplace.

If present trends are criteria, the future physician, in a decadent era, may himself afford an example of ambitious art's triumph over improvident nature. He will have been speeded into a carefully sterilized segment of the world by an obstetrician via the quick, painless and æsthetic abdominal route. Standing by will be a pediatrician to check his weight, measure his length and prescribe his nutriment, unpredictable in composition, but assuredly not derived from his mother's breast. An endocrinologist will supervise his growth and development, a neuro-psychiatrist his reactions, mentality and aptitudes. He will have one or more rounds with an epidemiologist, dermatologist, laryngologist, oculist, aurist, orthopædist, assorted surgeons. Having been tested, analysed, vaccinated, immunized and insulated against life's stormy blasts, he will, if spared, reach maturity bereft of his adenoids, tonsils, appendix, adhesions, birth-marks and pimples. The urologist, serologist, allergist, proctologist and cardiologist will then take over and contribute their mites to his well-being.

It is not to be presumed that his position will be anomalous; having kept abreast the times, he will fit nicely into the spineless, gutless society in which he moves. To exist will by then have become an effortless routine, his clientele bolstering its minor strains with an infallible placebo prescribed every hour over the radio, dispensed at every soda fountain. The family doctor as we know him will have passed into oblivion; an occasional specimen may be discovered, but his value will be so greatly enhanced by rarity as to place him beyond reach of all but those of great wealth and fine discrimination.

Shortly after returning to Alaska, following two years' service in World War I, I was handed a job as surgeon of a large gold-mining company. Gone were my lingering hopes of becoming a neurologist. Instead, while still specializing in general practice

and indulging a flair for obstetrics, I must now specialize in traumatic surgery. This meant, in addition to gathering the scattered ends of private practice, the care and treatment of wounds and injuries of all kinds and degrees of severity, suffered among a thousand employees engaged in a very hazardous occupation.

Contrary to my pre-existing notions, military service in war contributes little if anything to the medical officer's proficiency in peace-time practice, and this, I believe, applies more generally the closer one comes to the scene of action. So far as actual medical and surgical care is concerned, sick or wounded soldiers undoubtedly get more of it, of better quality, than does the average civilian. But the method of its administration is seldom encountered in private practice; war necessitates everything having been planned, systematized and regimented with such precision that, once set in motion, it proceeds almost of its own momentum. Every contingency is foreseen, all essentials are at hand; with the patient under absolute control, all instructions are carried out promptly and explicitly, without regard for cost or the interference of friends, relatives or neighbours.

All this is extremely favourable to the patient's recovery, but it is not conducive to keeping the doctor in trim for private practice, where he is confronted with refractory patients, inadequate materials, dumb or forgetful attendants, and relatives to whom he must listen politely and disregard with consummate tact. Furthermore, except in base hospitals, the military medical officer is denied the enormously important privilege of checking his results, of carrying his patient through to the end; once his job of the moment is finished, be it dressing a simple wound, amputating a limb or administering restoratives, the patient joins an endless stream into other less hurried or more skilled hands at the rear. In view of these circumstances it was advisable for me to take a rather extensive course of post-graduate study before entering into my new duties.

Boston was disagreeably cold. After finishing two months at Harvard Post-Graduate Medical School we went down to Washington, where the weather was warmer. But we knew that Alaska was much colder. As I still had some spare time to kill, we started driving south, and at Jacksonville the long-repressed desire to visit Cuba again arose to plague me. Why not settle

once for all the riddle of my ancestry? After an interval of forty years the hope of finding any of my mother's family seemed forlorn, but it was worth a trial. And I wanted my wife to see Havana; it would, perhaps, silence her everlasting bragging about California's warmth and sunshine.

As we approached Morro Castle a few days later, and the city spread out before us like a sparkling jewel, she admitted, almost grudgingly, that it was beautiful. In Havana we found the hotel very comfortable, the weather all one could ask; on the food, beggars and flies my wife generously refrained from repetitious comment.

My Spanish was no longer trustworthy; therefore we engaged an interpreter and called on the Bishop of Havana. He heard my story with a great show of interest and was pleased to assist an alien Cuban in search of his family. It was his recollection, however, that the ancestral estate was in Matanzas, but he would make inquiry. Tomorrow he would be pleased to see me again.

Next day the Bishop had established the authenticity of my birth, and had located Maria and Mercedes Solano y Moreno. They were living in Vibora, a suburb of Havana, and, he said, doubtless could give me the information I desired.

Back at the hotel I braced myself with a Bacardi; the trail was getting warm. Or was I on a false scent? Who were these women? Were they, by chance, too distantly related to be interested in me, or I in them? Was I, for the first time since my early childhood, about to meet face to face with people of my own flesh and blood?—the only ones in existence so far as I knew. It was a situation I had pictured in my mind many times, and in many varieties of circumstances, none of which remotely resembled this present moment.

With the interpreter we started out in a taxi, driving beyond the National Hotel into one of the best residential sections of the city. Now this, I thought complacently, is about what I had expected, and my wife, sensing portentous moments ahead, sat up to straighten my hat possessively and brush something from my lapel. On this occasion I must look my best.

But we were not to stop at any of these establishments, which soon began shrinking in size and splendour. Streets grew progressively more narrow and crooked, the cobblestones thinned out and finally vanished in deep ruts and chuck-holes. Scores of ragged or stark-naked children, in colour from dark tan to deepest

black, raced after the car, chattering and squealing over the infrequent spectacle of a shining taxicab in their midst. My wife turned to me in embarrassed alarm.

"Let's go back," she whispered. "Let's just let things rest as they are and pretend we couldn't find them."

My own feelings were none too sanguine; something of the kind was also running through my mind. I knew the colour line in Cuba had never been drawn very tightly; suppose these distant relatives were black, or even brown. For some distance we had not passed one individual with a white skin. I leaned forward, spoke to Frank, the interpreter.

"Is this Vibora?"

"No, this is Old Town. Vibora is very nice place."

Presently we fetched up before a small house set back from the street in what seemed to be a respectable neighbourhood. The door opened perhaps an inch in response to Frank's ring, then after a moment slowly gave way to admit him. It was then immediately closed. We fidgeted in the car an interminable ten minutes, the small very black driver dozing over the wheel, the old stone house as silent as a tomb. When at last the door opened we looked sharply, but could see no one but Frank, who motioned for me to come inside. I there found two elderly and charming cousins, entirely white, who, after crossing themselves devoutly before a veritable miracle, greeted me as one risen from the dead.

I called my wife. Out of an utter deluge of excited Spanish we learned that the once rich and proud Solanos had fallen on evil days; two ten-year insurrections against Spain had exhausted the great sugar plantations owned by the family for perhaps a century. Piece by piece it had been confiscated, or sold, until only sufficient income remained to keep body and soul together.

There were but three of us remaining. Aunt Isobel, my mother's elder sister, whom I seemed to recall dimly, had died two years before. The repository of family heirlooms and traditions—indeed, a great lady who lived in shocked and pious retirement—she was convinced to the end that her favourite sister had met foul play at the hands of northern barbarians. Cousins Maria and Mercedes, daughters of Uncle Manuel, to whom they said I bore a striking likeness, divided some family portraits with me, and the background I had so earnestly sought, and so feebly improvised while living with Uncle Ike in Deadwood, was given a solid foundation.

My father, it seems, was born in or near New Orleans about

1840, of French extraction. He was said to be a physician by profession, but an adventurer by avocation; there is no record of his accomplishments in the field of medicine. I recalled faintly his slender figure, lively eyes and small moustache, but the recollection was always confused: sometimes he appeared in rags, sometimes in top hat and frock coat. This was understandable when I learned of his life in Cuba.

Along with other spirited young rebels he had probably emigrated south following the Civil War, rather than submit to an oppressive reconstruction. At any rate, in 1874 he was taking an active part in the Cuban revolution, and later was married in Havana to Maria, nineteen-year-old daughter of Manuel Solano y Moreno, granddaughter of Fernando Solano y Salcedo, a former Governor-General of Cuba.

To be thus allied with a follower of the hated rebel General Gomez was an outrage to the aristocratic and loyally Spanish house of Solano, but, as is not unusual in such cases, the birth of a son, myself, made possible a reconciliation.

Unfortunately, my father's revolutionary activities did not end with the treaty ending the war between Cuba and Spain. Until 1883 he was under suspicion, no doubt justly, of aiding the exiled patriot Marti in his plans for renewing hostilities. At length the Solano family's influence was no longer sufficient to protect him, or possibly his interest in Cuba Libre abated; with his wife and son he disappeared. It was learned, indirectly, that they had reached New York. Still later it was understood they had all died in an epidemic of smallpox.

ALL doctors are jealous of any professional priorities which may fall their way: to be first in the realms of scientific discovery, or in adopting new methods, or even in making mistakes, may be of incalculable good to suffering humanity. The fact that pride is not always in direct ratio to value of accomplishment is immaterial; we see long and bitter controversies raging over prior rights to curious and inconsequential technicalities.

Pioneer medical practice is always rich in priorities. In any given locality where there has been no adequate medical service the chance to be first to do something, however unimportant, amounts to certainty. This was so in old Alaska, where I believe I was first to perform a successful Cæsarian section upon my first attempt; to use the newly discovered 606 in syphilis; to induce twilight sleep in obstetrics with scopolamine and morphine; to use pipe-cleaners wrapped in gauze as surgical drains; to catheterize a woman with a cigarette-holder sterilized in kerosene; to make serviceable moulded splints with gauze dipped in flour paste; to cultivate a strain of pure streptococci from what was locally known as fish-poisoning; to pull sixty-odd teeth before breakfast in an Indian village, my patients sitting on a convenient rock.

No one, so far as I know, preceded me in losing twenty-one dollars on four aces in a penny ante, ten-cent-limit poker game; or in charging a millionaire one hundred dollars for a complete hysterectomy on his wife and have him kick at the cost; or repairing the stump on a man who had amputated his own foot, caught four days before in a bear trap; or treating five cases as chicken-pox and discovering, when one died, that the disease was smallpox. Nor had anyone previously brought healthy twins, or siblings, into the world three days apart, or delivered a baby in the Governor's mansion, another in an Indian canoe five miles from shore, another in a Ford, another in an office waiting-room, and still another while the mother sat on her husband's lap, her arms clinging around his neck.

No doubt the list could be extended had not my early records

burned along with my office *circa* 1930. But it is of sufficient length to indicate that to be first to do the unusual may be of no consequence in the general scheme of things. In medicine, what really matters is the doctor's knowledge of and interest in his clientele's disabilities, and his ability to do something about them without unnecessary fuss or delay.

In the Alaska of later years, when the country was taking on the aspects of modernity, a large percentage of one's practice was made up of trifling ailments and injuries, already diagnosed by the patient, who was often well on the road to recovery. But among them was a sprinkling of afflictions which were not self-limited and an occasional one of utmost gravity. It was these which kept one ever on the alert, apprehensive and forearmed; in fact, without them the practice of medicine would be a dreary, Peck-sniffian business. One must keep in mind that a simple scratch may be infected, that a bruise may conceal a fracture, a colicky pain may portend appendicitis, a sore throat diphtheria; a persistent headache may, among other things, point to the onset of an acute contagious disease, some form of toxæmia, nephritis, sinusitis, high blood-pressure, neuralgia, migraine, a head injury, eyestrain, meningitis, brain tumour, syphilis, menstrual disorder, or to an unsuspected psychoneurosis.

Just when and for how long should one allow nature to take its course in a world where the course of nature is constantly frustrated? Just what and how much should the patient be told, and how much weight should be given to what he says, tempered and coloured as it often is by fear, anxiety, pain, or simple perversity? Answers to these questions must be distilled from one's knowledge and experience, the physical signs and symptoms, the surroundings and circumstances, possibilities no less than probabilities, and the intangible prompting of intuition. All of these enter into the situation and determine the course to be pursued.

Every doctor knows scores of patients who wilfully deceive themselves, and others who lie outrageously and persistently when they seek his aid, often to their own disadvantage. I recall one poor little girl who insisted angrily, tearfully, and at last in despairing resignation, that her slowly enlarging abdomen must be caused by a tumour, as indeed it was, but of a kind which nature expels at the end of gestation; and another who denied stubbornly the existence of any pain or discomfort whatever while his carcinomatous larynx became hopelessly inoperable;

still another who never forgave my guarded suggestion of syphilis, and who later died of that disease.

Sick and injured miners, added to a rather lively general practice and to duties incidental to the office of Territorial Commissioner of Health, Secretary of the Medical Examining Board, and Secretary of the Alaska Medical Society, left little leisure in which to heed the speeding weeks and months and years. My regular working hours would have brought storms of protest, or worse, from any self-respecting labour agitator: from 8 to 12 a.m., and from 1 to 5 and 7 to 9 p.m. seven days a week, with one or more calls each night the rule rather than an exception. Each alternate year I spent two months in New York or Boston in post-graduate study; each summer we had two or three weeks' vacation cruising in the *Chirikov* along with the Pinkertons, or with Stewart Edward and Betty White in his *Simba*.

Without exception, Stewart White is the nerviest and least nervous man I know respecting the Alaska brown bear. This largest of carnivorous animals is, when startled or wounded or when he remembers a previous wound, a most formidable beast. Formerly, when they were more plentiful or perhaps were regarded with less respect, no summer passed without someone being mangled by a bear. Stewart's favourite diversion was to stroll up a creek facing the wind, settle himself at some advantageous point overlooking a gravel bar, with camera in hand, rifle on knees, waiting for bears. Often enough to give zest to this risky sport they appeared, sometimes singly, sometimes *en famille*, and occasionally they came uncomfortably close. I recall once when he stood his ground while four big fellows approached to exactly sixteen steps from the buzzing camera, when they got our scent and decamped with comical backward glances and warning growls.

Though an enthusiastic fisherman, Stewart is also an ardent conservationist of fish: everything caught measuring less than six inches in length, or over ten, must be thrown back. Anywhere but in Alaska this practice would have held production down to reasonable domestic consumption, but trout are there so plentiful they once rated a Territorial bounty. As a result of Stewart's generosity and his stern disapproval of waste, we had rainbows, cutthroats or Dolly Vardens for breakfast and dinner every day. But as we grew increasingly fish-conscious they lost more and more of their delicious flavour until they all reeked of unsavouri-

ness. We were considerate of our friend's feelings; therefore let out our belts and exercised strenuously, which whetted our already excellent appetites without changing or diminishing the where-withal to satisfy them. When all the empty containers on the *Chirikov* had been filled with salted and pickled trout, we dropped the surplus overboard at night, and were mortified to find them floating alongside the boat next morning. We tried rowing ashore and burying them until my wife discovered Stewart on the *Simba's* quarter-deck, his field-glasses trained upon us. Finally, after various methods of disposal had failed, we hit upon the simple expedient of storing the superabundance in a chain locker, then dumping them behind us as we trailed the *Simba* into new fishing grounds.

That we all are more or less recessive to primitive characteristics and impulses was brought to mind one night in Murder Cove, where we were camping on the beach. Late one evening a huge ocean-going yacht crept around the point and anchored about a half-mile distant. No one came ashore. As deep twilight settled over the water a few lights were dimly visible through the ship's port-holes, but it remained as silent and decorous as a deserted church. Next morning, after taking Stewart across to explore another trout stream, I steered my little skiff past the yacht, and was hailed by a man standing on deck and invited to come aboard.

Surrounded with every luxury and convenience, the vessel's owner, president of a great railroad system, was lonesome. With his wife, two sons then on vacation from Harvard, and three guests, he had been cruising Alaskan waters for a month under the inquisitive eyes of a twenty-three man crew. He had not gone ashore outside the towns, which were of no interest to him; he had spent most of the time in his state room reading detective stories which bored him. Watching our camp-fire on the beach the night before had made him both curious and envious, and he accepted with a show of eagerness my invitation to join us that evening.

The women of our party were appalled at the prospect of entertaining guests of such prominence, but drew comfort from a belief that the president was merely being polite, that there was little chance of his coming. Nevertheless we prepared to make a good showing. Stewart and I caught more crabs; Jimmie, our Indian pilot, chief engineer, deck-hand, guide and game-getter, cleared away the underbrush, started a driftwood fire and made a spit to rest upon two forked sticks over a bed of coals.

Guests and all they came, bringing with them a provisional hamper of food, which was returned unopened, and half a dozen bottles of excellent wine, which was consumed at dinner. Everyone served himself and sat on the ground, and some, probably for the first time in their lives, discovered truth and usefulness in the old saying that fingers were made before forks. For dinner we had goose-tongue salad with a pungent sauce, roast leg of venison, hot skillet-baked bread with wild strawberry jam, fresh crab boiled in sea water and served whole. For the boys who wanted to try their luck at camp cooking there were tenderloin venison steaks to be grilled on long sticks over the coals.

Once under way, reserve was soon cast off and the dinner was a great success. But when it came to tackling a whole uncracked crab the visiting ladies flinched; it was a job wholly outside their experience, but the president rose gallantly to the occasion.

"Now, mamma," said he to his wife, "this is one time and place where we've no flunkies to wait on us. We're strictly on our own. There's some good meat in these things and we've got to get it out ourselves. Watch me."

We sat around the camp-fire until long after midnight: until Jimmie had made three trips to the *Chirikov* and *Simba* for more of what it takes to make skillet-baked bread, and until nothing remained of the venison but bare bones and the crabs were a heap of empty shells. A year later in Philadelphia the president referred to that night on the beach in Murder Cove as the most enjoyable one of his trip to Alaska.

Until recently, one outstanding characteristic of Alaskans was their air of impermanency. Everyone gave an impression of being there on a month-to-month, year-to-year tenure, which stretched into decades and generations, yet remained a temporary expedient. I knew a family who occupied one house for ten years without unpacking their baggage. Much of this apparent instability was probably handed down from the old gold-rush days, when settlements sprang up overnight and were as quickly abandoned for bigger and better strikes made elsewhere. To this day many old-timers speak of the territory's largest towns as camps, though gold-mining is the least important of their industries.

We, too, talked confidently and at length of establishing a home somewhere in the States where winters were milder and skies brighter, but with no particular elysium in view, my wife's

preferences running to old oak trees and meadow-larks, while I favoured craggy mountains, deserts and salt water. Having failed to run across this combination of attractions in an area small enough to come within our means, we marked time until an acceptable substitute was sold to us, almost before we knew it.

On our way back to Alaska from New York late one November we stopped overnight in southern California with some former Alaskans. Next morning our friends insisted on showing us the town, as do all southern Californians, a surprising number of whom are subtle propagandists dabbling in real estate. After driving around awhile we stopped before an old adobe house seemingly about ready to fall apart. My friend just happened to remember it was for sale.

"Wouldn't you like to see the biggest oak tree in town?" he asked my wife, quite casually.

"Let's make it snappy," said I, reminding her of a dinner engagement nearly three hundred miles farther north.

It was then ten o'clock on Saturday morning, usually considered a safe day and hour to be out riding with a California booster. But before noon, when all business offices and banks close, we had walked through the house and grounds, found the owner, verified the title, hastily computed our ready cash, bought the place, and were on our way north.

That evening in Burlingame our friends wanted to know about the new ranchito. How large was it? We didn't know, but imagined there were about two acres. How many rooms? My wife thought there were six or seven, maybe eight. Where was it? Well, you passed the Old Mission, then turned right, or was it left? Anyway, it wasn't very far out, and we recalled a big stone fireplace, a lot of oak trees and a fractional view of some craggy mountains.

Owning a home in California, though the cost of restoring it added up to more than the original purchase price, tended to alienate our interest in Alaska and to remind us of what we had steadily refused to acknowledge, even to ourselves: we were getting along in years. What were we going to do with those remaining to us? The north was still a land of opportunity, but how much more of it did we want? Or need?

Youngsters whom I had brought into the world, and attended through infancy and adolescence, were being graduated from high schools, returning from universities, engaging me to attend the births of their own babies. Men of my age were already

grandfathers; older men whom I had known since first coming to the territory were passing from the scene, leaving voids which could not be filled. A new generation had arrived, respectful of our years and not too self-assured, but with a trace of cynicism in their manner and firm purpose in their eyes, saying in effect: "Here now, you've had your turn. You've prepared us to take over and we're ready. Why not give us a chance?"

When I learned, to my astonishment, that I was the oldest doctor in the territory but one, in point of residence, pictures of Dr. Simpson rose in my mind with disconcerting frequency.

Already well beyond middle age, he had come to Alaska in the gold-rush and built up an enormous practice, and had held for more than thirty years the confidence and respect of all who knew him, which included practically everyone in the country. He was a doctor of whom his patients said, "I'd rather have old Doc Simpson drunk than anyone else around here sober." He was one who scorned all social gatherings, never refused to make a call, never sent out a bill, and who read, talked and thought of nothing but his profession. As nearly everyone in town was indebted to him, enough money came in voluntarily each month to satisfy his wants, which were extremely modest.

But year by year we younger men cut deeper and deeper into his practice. Old patients who had sworn by him through all sorts of injuries and ailments were sending for us late at night after closely drawing the blinds, or stealing into the office after watching him turn a corner. When he finally realized that something was amiss no show of affection could brighten the puzzled, wistful look in his eyes, no protestations of gratitude could compensate him for the diminishing confidence in his professional skill. Crowded back into second place and later into third, he gave up the struggle and left town, a broken-hearted and resentful old man.

What had moved his loyal patients to change doctors? His wisdom, experience and personal knowledge of their health problems were far greater than ours, his mind was still alert, his hand steady, his judgment sure. While his methods were somewhat out-dated, no one ever questioned his faithfulness and sincerity of purpose.

It was obvious to me that he had suffered the usual consequences of having practised medicine in a small community too long; that he had come to know his patients too well to exhibit keen interest

in their minor complaints, which meant so much to them, and which, by adequate attention or by seeming indifference, can make or break a doctor. Emergencies excepted, all the local practice was old stuff to Dr. Simpson; at one time or another most of it had already passed through his hands.

It was also possible that his clientele had come to know him too well; that long and familiar association, in circumstances of isolation and intimacy, had dispelled those qualities of mystery and omniscience with which grateful patients are inclined to endow their doctors, yet without which medicine would lose something of its effectiveness.

Sanctioned by great antiquity, if by nothing more practicable, the public mind reaches deeply into the occult for causes and cures of its diseases, bringing up a curious assortment of remedies, as witnessed by the pseudo-therapeutic antics of uncounted exorcists, cultists, healers, adjusters, soothsayers and miracle workers, all busily engaged in treating the sick. Even modern doctors of high professional attainments are not violently averse to practising their art in a thin aura of mysticism, which, in selected cases, serves to stimulate the patient's receptivity. But no one worthy of the title ever bases his practice on fraud.

Somewhere along the route from destitute adolescence to the sufficiency of middle age I had read, and now remembered, that when Fortune's cup is drained the last sip is apt to be embittered by the dregs. This could be interpreted to mean that one should know when and how to make a happy exit; to leave the stage while applause still rings in one's ears. I was beginning to wonder if, in my complacency, I was not overlooking that guiding principle.

For thirty years I had been having the time of my life; the profession into which I had finally intruded myself had grown upon me until it was an integral and essential part of my being. A hard master, but a willing servant once its nature was understood, its rules observed, I had found it a fascinating companion in whose company I was never bored. Nothing interested me as a possible substitute; there was nothing else I wanted to do, and I had not the slightest intention of repeating Dr. Simpson's self-deception, or of inviting the dismal consequences of feeling sorry for myself ever after.

Something in the nature of professional rejuvenation seemed to be a sensible alternative; to find new friends in new surroundings, to establish new offices, hang out a new sign and again feel

the thrill of greeting that first new patient whose troubles were unknown to me, and therefore more stimulating, was an experience worthy of considerable risk.

As it turned out there were no risks; the undertaking proved to be sound and wise. When the cold Alaska rains turned into sleet, and later into snow on the mountains, the idea grew irresistible. The old adobe house in California was calling us in voices not to be denied.